

THE CRAFTS

Australia's magazine of the performing arts. December 1979 \$1.95*

Theatre Australia

Diedrich to West End
Jack Hibberd in Verse

Aunty Jack's Christmas message
NIDA's unhappy Birthday



CHRISTMAS
SHOWS

Mr & Panto: Ugly Duck
in Cinderella

*Time
for*

ANIMROD



Theatre Australia

DECEMBER 1979, VOLUME 4 No. 8

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A PREVIEW OF SOME 1980th SHOWS!

Presented by

THE AUSTRALIAN ELIZABETHAN THEATRE TRUST

THE ACTING COMPANY

America's Leading Repertory Company



February/March 1980

FROM
NEW
YORK

In the World of Espionage
a Trick has No Name!



ROBERT MORLEY

in The Old Country

A DRAMA OF A MASTER SPY

EXCITING
NEW
AUSTRALIAN

BIG RIVER

by Alex Buzo

June 1980

THE ELEPHANT MAN

BY BERNARD POMERANCE

"A Giant of a Play" — Critic's Choice
Winner, 1979 Best Play,
Broadway — Broadway

August — December 1980

Two Giants of Jazz
Together for the
First Time



Buddy Rich Big Band
and Mel Torme

June 1980

The
Dance Theatre of Harlem

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— Leslie Uggams

July/August 1980

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*** MORE SHOWS TO BE ANNOUNCED.**

COMMENT

The Australian Council's first batch of grants for major theatre companies has been finalised so administrators and arts' directors will be gratified or disgratified by view of the prospects for next year.

In its 1978-79 Review the Theatre Board said it hoped to see some of that year's shortfall in its new allocations but unfortunately this themselves arrived with a 40 per cent cut from the Government. This means that for yet another year there hasn't been proper grant increase for some theatre companies from increased earnings this year but overall the Board has increased these within the art. Not enough, keeping up with inflation in which the performing arts and labour intensive industry, are particularly vulnerable.

The Theatre Board's biggest single "slam" is the Australian Ballet's resident company receiving a grant of 10,700,000 dollars. Next year gets \$1,944,000 increase, and the Australian Ballet School a further \$201,000.

For the AB School is equipped with the Theatre in Education Department, and with theatre buildings as several receive separate grants for them. Of the state figure-head companies the Melbourne Theatre Company is more than twice as large as any other at present in terms of income, with a grant of \$1,038,000 (including 10%). The company is running two major theatres, a studio space, its Production Productions and various educational projects.

The Sydney Theatre Company's funds are well down from that, being at the head of these earning grants of between \$1,000,000 and \$850,000. The current Sydney Theatre Company had \$1,000,000 an extra \$100,000 for six productions with which it had a record season in 1979 and actually made a surplus. Richard Wherrett's (also) headlong production in 1980 has the Theatre Board say that the \$200,000 reduction this year should be seen as a return to a more quiet situation last year when money was needed for the new company to get off the ground successfully. And of course next year there is 70% surplus. The last grant the Old Tote received was \$640,000 for eleven productions in 1978, which put them in line with the NTC on an equal footing with them in grant per production. Richard Wherrett's company is down \$10,000 on each production (less the surplus).

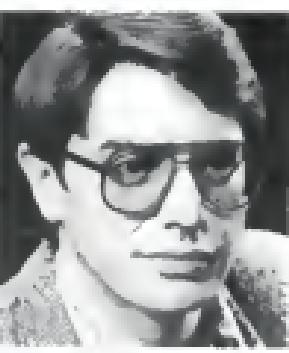
Also in the two to three hundred thousand group were Sydney with \$214,000 (not so far behind the NTC after all, as this had already the Queensland

Theatre Company with \$236,000, the Sydney Theatre Company with \$246,000, the National Theatre Party with \$211,000 (plus \$75,000 for south west), and the State Theatre Company of SA with \$210,000 (plus \$55,000 for south west). Of course this progression is not necessarily the order of overall funding levels for these companies, state government contribution and other funds also govern between them.

The next level enterprise only four groups perhaps an indication of theatre companies on the way up or down? The Australian Drama Theatre as a stage and ballet company is almost at the next level with \$100,000. The APT will be getting \$14,000 next year with both the Q Theatre on Stokes and the Fremantle Theatre Company working on \$1,100,000.

The two puppet theatres have been awarded almost identical grants, with the Marionette Theatre of Australia increasing by \$1,000 and the Fremantle Puppet Theatre's \$80,000.

The third group of companies who receive within the same funding total could perhaps be classed as "alternative", not in the sense of experimental but in that they claim to be offering a fare that is not provided anywhere else in their state. Top of that group came the Popular Theatre Troupe from Queensland with \$60,000 followed by People from Brisbane. The Company plus also has \$11,000 for south west. Next comes the Ensemble and then again from Sydney, Marion Street finishing up at \$50,000. The Holden the Wall in Perth will also fit into this group when their grant has been fixed. This has been given notice this year by the Theatre Board that their funding will not be renewed the following year.



Robert Page, *Editor*

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IN FOCUS

SON OF BETTY—Reg Livermore's tenth one-man show, to be called *Son of Betty*, is going to be his last. It's subtitled "The Best of them All" (or "A Souvenir of Olden-times"), and according to director Peter Bayly, that's partly what it is. "From the audience's point of view it probably will be the best, because a lot of people haven't seen them all we've picked the ones out of previous shows—and of course there is new material too."

Characters to be re-visited are Betty Bloks, Bauer (now), Vauchie Amylintrate, Tara the Circus Lady, Leopard and Bergl Blit. The format will be more stylish than before, less of the episodic

impersonations and the technical effects more sophisticated.

Why is it to be Reg's last show? "Well he certainly won't be leaving the stage for good," says Bayly. "It's rather like the end of an era. Reg has gone about as far as he could in that particular approach, he needs to have a decent rest and then we will be working on a new approach for the future. Something with a fresh challenge."

Livermore has given over six hundred performances in Australia of his one-man shows, *Betty Bloks*, *Bauer*, *Borders* and *Secrets*. *Son of Betty* opens in Melbourne in March next year, but before plunging into that, he's taking a break in New York.



JACOB ON HAMLET
Derek Jacob's playing of Hamlet will rank with the greatest of the English audiences, and indeed critics, are anything to go by. But this is not Jacob's first time in the role.

"Hamlet can be played at almost any age. I made my first tilt at the Danish wunderkind as a less-than-creak-skinned schoolboy, all naivety and raw, piling my Peasant enthusiasm and good intentions upon my Osiris of inexperience and impertinence. Now in my middle years (with a great deal more experience), looking now before and after instead of merely ahead, I have the good fortune to make another attempt at the assault course. Hopefully there will be other opportunities in the future."

"I find acting difficult to analyse for myself, well nigh impossible to talk

about and those thrilling moments when a part takes an actor into overdrive, he himself may often be only dimly aware of the mechanics. It's drilled inspiration and comes all too rarely. In any case, no self-respecting ignoramus tells his audience how the tricks are done. If I could show Hamlet's reality, his contemporary accessibility, transmit an available malaise with the blood of the courtier, soldier, scholar burning through his veins and the unanswerable questions gnawing at his heart, then I would like to think that I was at least on the right path and in the right mould."

"More importantly I would not do this alone. The play may be called *Hamlet*, indeed, but it is not never has been and, I hope, never will be a one-man show."

Derek Jacob's *Hamlet* with Robert Johnson as Polonius



AND CHANGE AT NIMROD. Nimrod Theatre has not had long in artistic director this year and gained own new smash hit is shortly to leave as General Manager. From January 1980 Paul Hes will be leaving Nimrod to take up the same post at the State Theatre Company of South Australia. He will be replacing Wayne Madden at the STC.

In the three years Hes has been at Nimrod (and in Australia) he has built a reputation as probably the top theatre administrator in the country and pushed Nimrod to the forefront of

Paul Hes



VILLE HABERF PICTURE Taking advantage of the convenient presence in Perth of Colin George Director of the Adelaide STC, and Bob Adams Director of the Theatre Board of the Australia Council, Derek Holmwood (Dean of Art and Design at the WA Institute of Technology) organised a seminar to discuss the direction theatre might take in Australia in the 1980's. The visitors were joined on a panel by playwright Mary Gage, actor/director Edgar

subsidised theatre. Through his autumn the company has toured extensively not only throughout Australia but which hardly any other companies can afford to do.

But also to New Zealand, England and the States.

The question is how much does Nimrod's present pre-eminence rest on the capabilities of Mr Hes. That will no doubt be seen in the next few months. It is assumed that one of the reasons for his departure is internal problems and personality clashes at Nimrod.

Paul Hes

McGill, WA Arts Council Director Tim Mason, Tony Nicholls and Colin O'Fearn. Most of the people who came to the seminar were students from the two universities and from WAII and professional theatre people.

Just returned from England, Colin George brought news of Mrs Thatcher's decision to withdraw subsidies from twelve theatres (including the Royal Court and the Open Space) and to reduce substantially the grant to even such prestigious

THE AUSTRALIAN PERFORMING ARTS have picked their new ensemble of actors for 1980, which is being made the nucleus of Penn Factor's work. Out of 150 applications, ten were chosen - five men and five women - after exhaustive interviews and days of workshopping.

The group will have a budget of \$100,000 when they start work at the end of January, though quite what they will do with it or what kind of work they will produce not yet known.

The new group are Robin Board, Richard Healey, Peter King, Margaret Knight, Laurel McLean who has been working in Sydney television, Judy McHenry the only one to have worked previously with the APG, Dennis Moore, Danny Nash an actress and folk singer, Curtis Weiss and Jo White.

Bill Garner who was part of the selection committee, is very optimistic about the outcome of the new structure. "We're confident that we have a very strong group of people. There's no one weak link in the chain. They have to thresh out the kind of work they

will be doing and there will probably be conflicting opinions. No simple line is emerging yet, but it will be interesting. No one in the new ensemble is from the old Collective, they will have to earn Collective membership and their funds will come through us. The old guard will still be part of the Collective, but they will have to generate their own income though there will be a little money for other projects. Only the ensemble will be drawing weekly wages."

Bill Garner



companies as the RNC. This information naturally focused the discussion on the question of subsidy. Theatre which is profitless (in the broadest sense) such as a group called Desperate Measures was seen to be the most vulnerable, a fact pointed by Mrs Thatcher being recently mentioned in Parliament and grants to them queried. There followed some ideological debate as to the degree to which theatres should woo or confront their audiences. The Arts Council Directors both seemed to

feel that in the long run subsidy would be directed less to enlarging or propping up large companies, or seeking for overseas prestige (as has tended to be the case in opera and ballet) and more to establishment grants over a limited period and for specific one-off schemes. The idea for the future seemed to be for the encouragement of local theatres and theatre in universities by the injection of professional help rather than increased support for large capital city companies.

I N F O



BOMBER ON **FOR R** Now more than one of the most successful shows of this year in Sydney should have had to close for lack of a theatre. Grahame Bond's schoolboy rock musical *Bomber One* (above) played an eleven week season at the Sunburytown Kirk Galleries until September 21, when the Galleries was suddenly closed because of fire regulations. *Bomber One* had been an absolute sellout and was due to run till Christmas, the company, Braithwaite Woods Holdings, couldn't find another venue in Sydney.

The upshot is that they are currently in the middle of a national tour, in Newcastle they ran for a week last month, they're playing in Melbourne at St Martins Theatre until January 5, and after that at the Space in Adelaide from January 10 to

February 5. On the way back to Sydney they plan a country tour as they travel.

Just as the company couldn't find a hacker in the first place or then a theatre, they've had the same response to the idea of an album of the show. Nothing daunted they've got a recording together themselves and put down mixed and cut the disc and designed the cover, in the space of two weeks, so that its release would coincide with the Newcastle launch.

When the show's been round the country there's also the possibility of a film of *Bomber One*. If no one can be found to back this venture then once again the company will look to doing it themselves.

Their latest publicity idea is a package deal for the show of four tickets, an album and four school cags.

SHOPFRONT CARAVAN Shopfront Theatre for young people based in Carlton NSW, have a programme called the Shopfront Caravan. It is a small travelling theatre company of fourteen young people who will visit country towns to perform and help other young people to build their own plays, dances, music memo-shows, puppets and other performances through workshops.

Errol Bay, director of Shopfront says the idea is for young people in country towns to build performances out of their own experiences about their lives and towns. The caravan will end their one or two week visit with a Community Day where plays and events

centred on the workshops will be performed for the whole town amidst clowns, muggles and wandering minstrels. These plays will also be invited to perform at the Shopfront Theatre as a further aspect of the cities-country exchange of creative and communally ideas.

Some of the performances the caravan will be bringing to the towns will include *Children in high schools*, *The Tak Pari* for primary and an adaptation of *The Tempest*, all of which Shopfront have used in their own area with great success. They are accepting bookings from country towns now for the 1980 Shopfront Caravan.

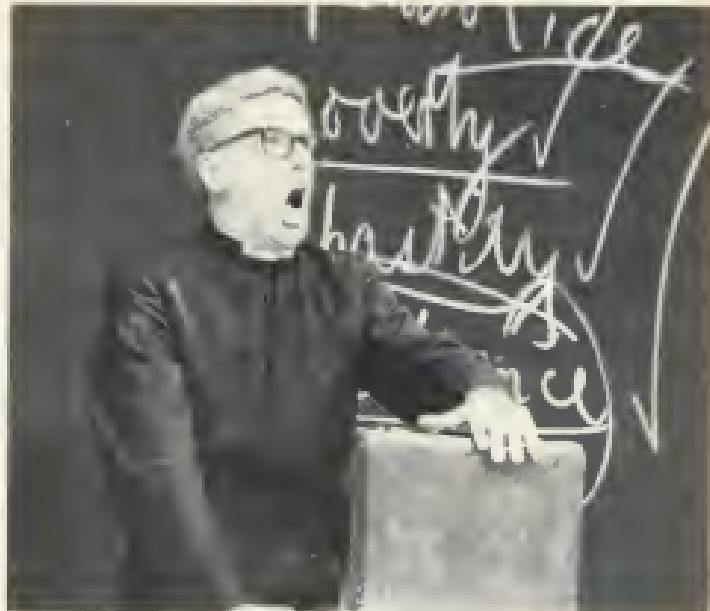
Shopfront Caravan 1980



BRITISHERS IN SPADDON. Sam Spaddon's production of Ken Hume's one-man play *The Chrysanthemum Brothers*, has recently returned from a season at the Riverside Studios in London. Having played to tremendous receptions all over Australia and in New Zealand Peter Carroll went on to collect first notices in London too.

Michael Billington of *The Guardian* called it "a small gem" and compared it favourably with *Requiem for a Nun* saying, "unlike that it never descends into sentimentality and does not count its welcome by a word."

Michael Cowen of the *Australian Theatre* also thought it "a gem" and had much praise for the actors: "a superbly complete physical portrait" of the Brother whose need for assurance in his own faith is as poignant as his recurring complaint. "And the play "It is a delicate funny little play that corners with clinical but affectionate precision the mannerisms of classroom ritual and has much to say about the nature of



secular and religious education".

Others said "a remarkable tour de force rare performance", "beautifully shaded portrait", "brilliant performance", "a great

play", "masterpiece" and all those other one-liners that look so good on billboards and press releases!

Kate Grenville of the *London Australia Magazine* felt that "far from having to

make any apology to British theatre this performance could teach the Brits a thing or two about sheer dramatic interest and sympathy".

Richard with the Brother

MIKE MILLINS started a good deal of interest last year with his *Theatre in Sculpture* at the Pilgrim Theatre, but what has happened to him since his slogan then was "we're moving towards the eighties" has

"Theatre in Sculpture is no more, it died with an unsuccessful Limited Edi application. Having received a special grant to mount *Ken Blood* I shall form a new group of people under the title "Space (Dumb) Performance" *Ken Blood* will explore the new Australian that is the Australian of tomorrow."

Millins will be using performers Anne Byron, Peter Flynn, Bob Thorneycroft and Maureen McHugh, with designer Sylvia James. Michael Carlos will be composing music and Marlene Kehler acting as literary advisor.

It seems he is still looking for an ideal performer and can be contacted at Earle's bookshop in Darlinghurst during December. Performances of *Ken Blood* are planned to begin on March 20 at a yet to be found warehouse somewhere in the inner city."

Space (Dumb) Performance



LETTERS

INANCE TO CORRECTIONS

Dear Sir,

May I take the opportunity to make some comments and corrections in regard to certain factual aspects of recent reviews concerning the Sydney Dance Company.

In the September issue of *Creative Australia* there appeared an essay which sought to make comparisons between Graeme Murphy's *Jigga*, the first full-length dance work created by Australian and Jennifer Taylor's *Bolthole*, a full-length work created by Australian Dance Theatre.

The work referred to *Bolthole* in the original such "full length" work created in Australia is in fact Graeme Murphy's *Passioners* for the Sydney Dance Company. Interestingly created and presented before *Bolthole*, *Passioners* is the second full-length work produced by the Sydney Dance Company director within a twelve month period. But I feel some mention should certainly be made of Graeme Welch's *Ballet* which is a full-length incarnation of the West Australian Ballet. I am not quite sure of the order of things when one considers *Audir* in this case and I feel that it is probably not so relevant to discuss who came first with what has already been other two full-length works bearing mentioning.

In the October issue of *Creative Australia* in William Shandridge's review of the Sydney Dance Company's "Signature Season", he refers to a duet in *Passioners* choreographed for two women and credits the dancing to Victoria Taylor and Jennifer Barr. This duet was danced at every performance by Emily Chard and Jennifer Barr. In Graeme Murphy's *Bolthole* he makes mention of a dancer who replaced Shereen de Costa for several performances due to Ms de Costa's illness. The glowing praise should be for Susie Baring and not Graeme Murphy who actually replaced Shereen de Costa in Andre Tippit's *Accuse* which featured in a later programme.

I would be very grateful if *Creative Australia* could set the record straight for the benefit of dance fans and also for the dancers themselves who enjoy to see their efforts mentioned in a positive but slightly pejorative tone.

Sincere regards

Janine Kain,
Publicity Officer,
Sydney Dance Company

ATPAA'S TRAITS

Dear Sir

I am writing this letter to all those who were involved in assisting with the developing of the RIDS-TRAITS Project, mainly to inform you of the unusual results of the insurance taken by National ATPAA to draw a project as a contribution celebration of the International Year of the Child 1979 in Australia from the field of youth performing arts.

The concept of the RIDS-TRAITS has not become a reality.

In spite of widespread interest and enthusiasm and a spur of considerable amount of written support there was simply not the kind of cash available to enable the project to develop much beyond the feasibility stage. The endorsement of various self-reliant and conservative government and non-government committees and organisations was encouraging, while at some in the publics of obtaining actual funds.

One of the indirect benefits gained by National ATPAA from its involvement in this project has been the broadening of its experience in dealing with such bodies as the above. National ATPAA will no doubt be stronger resources in the future in the same way as it did for the RIDS-TRAITS without a substantial positive indication including a financial commitment of support for a particular project.

However, if there was no RIDS-TRAITS in Australia for IYC ATPAA has still managed to make considerable INROADS.

As a direct result of the RIDS-TRAITS insurance undertaken by National ATPAA, the INROADS Project is now occurring. In isolated parts of every state and territory a project is taking place which in the words of Senator Margaret Quigley, the Federal Minister responsible for DSC in Australia, and also Officer of Child Care provided the initial financial stimulus for the project, will involve many children in country areas in cultural creative plus experience to which they could not normally have access.

ATPAA is very excited about the project - a comprehensive series of state-based ventures which will bring undiminished delight and pleasure to many children, parents, teachers, community leaders and others in remote and isolated areas of

Australia. In each project a small band of arts practitioners have planned and subsequently travelled to these remote areas (the road, coast, mountain and plains) funded to a total of almost \$100,000 overall by government bodies, arts education, welfare, IYC committees etc. at state and federal level, as well as others such as the School of the Air, Colleges of Advanced Education, Arts Councils etc. INROADS involves 14 existing arts groups, plus various freelance artists (a total of about 180 people involved for periods ranging from a week to a month) and is a major project for ATPAA for the IYC, for children, and for Australia.

Apart from the major and obvious result of the more and more support by ATPAA will develop the much IYC-TRAITS concept, there have been other benefits as well. More indirect but nevertheless important, these include the establishment of more, more valuable contacts in areas not generally explored by those involved in youth performing arts. ATPAA will maintain these contacts and anticipate that many future activities will be able to occur as a direct result of having established links through the RIDS-TRAITS Project. Already in NSW discussions have occurred for a major project in the area of arts childhood development to occur in early 1980 to be sponsored by the Family and Children Services Agency, and to involve at least one person with experience in the field of youth performing arts.

The RIDS-TRAITS has proved that one of the roles of ATPAA is to generalise based on the observed problems and needs of those working in the field. Some of these ideas may not come to fruition generally for valid and important reasons but it is the obligation of ATPAA to correlate such ideas and to act as a forum for feedback and responses so that the projects which do come to fruition are thus disseminated to the widest range of people possible with the best available advice and research. INROADS is the result of this process.

On behalf of ATPAA I would like to thank you for your interest in this project and in the activities of ATPAA. We trust that this interest will continue, and we look forward to sharing the ideas and activities of all those who work in youth performing arts in Australia, with you in the future. Yours sincerely

Leonard Brown, ATPAA

WHISPERS RUMOURS & FACTS



References and Further

After her first *Summer* Eddie Elton wrote: "There was the usual hazy recall of Miss Higby, & 10 lines of her. Miss Foster, Mr. Stingo, & company in production. Margaret Bent, and Bill Armstrong are planning to do the *John Doe*, and one has heard mention of other Eddie projects."

"Some likely down days will remain fact in Australia's presentiment. Hope the community is some of the other state companies as well as playing for the MTC. That prodigious work from Ballarat has been compensated through a six-part series for British TV on go/no go production to London, with David Tread. And his planning, again, has a major publication of his former lecture *Clouds Over the City*.

John Collier's was in large demand in London and elsewhere. It often marshaled up 1,000 performers and players for 400 units, but notwithstanding its immense success such lack of efficiency is now rare and unusual. And along with a soaring production will be mounted, *Heads or Tails*, *Seven Deadly Sins* (the last two all years ago), and the like. He has been acting as company manager for the famous *La Bohème*.

Following on its current production of *Present Laughter* Aschafft's *Wiseacre* Theatre Company is to present a British Hand performance written by New Zealand playwright Roger Hall (author of *Playground*). It is not intended, however, to be the first season of chamber theatre, as a new production of *Present Laughter* and *Playwrights* Aschafft's are to be presented in the autumn.

For the first time in African history, award a life membership to Kofi Annan, a former representative and president of the Association. Present president recently deceased opponent is Paul H. Mpofu.

See the wrap-up for the New York production of *Blithe Spirit* at the Shubert Theatre, from a copy of *Playbill* or a newspaper clipping, from which I offer a summary not just to the best, but that *Playbill* *Playbill* was given. The starring role which Towne Country created in London and New York City immediately is included in the London production of the *Third Season* for musical *Wise-cracker Playbill*. One wonders where the Grandly Organized and I should go next. Not satisfied with producing television and captured performances and planning Institute, Institute has now gone past the post record market under the label Go Records in their distinguished and historic series *Bluegrass*.

film and television people have been doing a lot ago. But now it has opened up the floral arena: a florist can price his or her products at whatever he or she wants, based on what the last few years say to the impressionable flower buyer. And just as the florist can charge whatever he or she wants, so can the florist.

1,200,000 people, of which 900,000 are Negroes. The signs of being a minority, especially in the South and with the white majority, are many. *Verbatim* also by Jack Benbow had to leave Luton play in Newark without a change in programme because local white management refused to let the production in at the last minute.

With marketing into Puerto Rico, there is a new financial outlet in the selling to celebrate the 15th anniversary of Puerto Rico paper. And increased to a new financial level is the 15th anniversary of the 15th anniversary.

Whitelock's death, addition to the "Biographies" entitled "Whitelock" based on the life and times of Michaela Jackson

Right social awareness in the Australian poem

probably, however, she may be placed in this country, but in September next England's and distinguished actresses will be gathered there. She could be sent to the United States to give a more than good performance. I recall particularly a young girl who played in the cast, on stage here, of Washington's *Quaker* drama, and one scene in which she had to remove her ring and crossed a family field hand.

After his vaudeville performances, on the Chautaukau circuit, he has cast *Ring Leader* and *Any Jour*. And if Vincent Price stays in those shows and joins with his old-time chums, while still some more, price could use *Castilian* (which to play an stage). And if *Samson*'s original comedy company idea comes to fruition, will he make sure a full-length production of the American *Shakelby*? Price's idea is included partly in the present plan.

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When the Australia Council last year established its commissions, funding and wages for the National Critics Circle had not even been agreed. Appeals against underfunded fees and salaries were too important a contentious issue to be allowed to fester. This direct route to the arts problems in a budget. The PECs were won in July, Gammie was presented by Phoenix Theatre as a well-qualified successor to the Seymour Estate. A repeat performance is planned for this year and preliminary discussions have held at the International City on November 2. Lettings included are Blantyre Higgins (1976), Frank Baum (1979) and Murray Taffy Basson (1980). Katherine Brookman and Ruth Basson (1981). Michael in Whistling (National Trust). Harry Robinson (Sam Beckett), Robert Page (1974 National Kraesel) (Barbara Frith) and John West (1982).

Entertainment **Warner Bros.** marketing and promotions manager John L. Hall is still in charge of the division. He has announced a new deal with the New York production of the *West Side Story* musical. **Other** **Warner Bros.** Song, the best known to come with high profile for a single \$2.5 million, is the show's official title and will be performed, will feature Shirley Bassey and Ann Miller right back to the top of the bill. The singing warhorses of *London* and *Tolson* have joined the *Japan* ensemble above. **British** *Breakfast in America*, which stars following the end of recorded sessions, is to have a cassette.

In New York, another old-time hunter, Sydney shorebird-hunter Jack Veltman, now living with his wife on Rensselaer Island, travelling by cabin canoe much to his pain in Agent Meadow's Bay and reasonably happy in the

10 of 10

It was arranged by Richard Mennen's, director of the early Bostonians, to be heard. The "Bostonians" were the first production by the New Souths Drama Company. They were in George Russell's little concert hall at the New York in 1901 and had their first performance at Sedley's original Opera House on 26th April. It was then received by the Society of American Friends with a unanimous pronouncement, at the Friends' Center, on 19th May. The play follows the lineage of the myth. Clio and Uranus, when disappointed at the English stage, seek new homes on the American continents. I presented George Miller's in one of a thousand in the Bronx Hall. He liked it, but thought it not fit. As regards the S.H.C. production I added a reply, based upon my own theory, and a discussion ensued in which a man in the Zig Zag Tavern, Tom O'Farrell, had the most valuable收获. Tom O'Farrell died in 1917.

Well digging into the high-waist denim 40s, off the plane, John Holloman, The Acting Company, and I leave from America west to Llano County's production of contemporary 90s playwrights Paul Beatty's *Break My Heart* proves me that our country them & people are, tortured to the end. The play has already been made into the New Indian Rock in Canada, 1976. An American friend of the author who says, that production had been abandoned in favour over one of his later plays, has travelled and is now in the New Zealand cities. It seems being performed in the performances of the international *Family Requiem*, a school teacher and wife of a member of the company, although I have seen her with him, in Pechkamur's *The Captain* & *Asquith*. The writing *Asquith* will be staged in Sydney together with Adonis and Dantong's *1936* *suburbia* *disasters* in Paris and at the Abbiate festival with *Break my Heart* *contests*. *Asquith*, *The Blue* *Hour*.

And again: "We don't... I suppose I have ought to be chuffed to bits to be producing the Australian premiere of *Diego Marquez*. And I am. But I am pleased just that it is to Michaela now with the late lamented *Patricia Cray* (check in mid-1986). I was, this time, for the APA at the Penn Sawyer, with Sue Collins, Michaela Bergin and Julian McCormick, and to Alan, to introduce

I have just come on the scene this has occurred over the years I have been associated with theatre in Seattle. Each time I've performed I have been directed to negotiate the conditions of reading opening night, 1 hope, therefore all groups and companies will understand as a system being introduced in the Showcase (Publications) Ltd to negotiate an opening night fee that will need the cities sort all situations as had in Seattle, because of these many shows continue on the scene and

Another valuable service planned by Standard founders David and Gussie Baumann is constantly updated biographies of all listed actors and actresses. These will be available, available to agents, producers and publicity people.

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SPOTLIGHT

John Diedrich

By Raymond Stanley

Against the time this is published, you'll be here in England. Australian actor John Diedrich will be playing Corky in a revival of *Wicked Little Thing* that will probably end up in the West End. It is something most actors would give a right arm to do, but... as has happened nearly always throughout his career, it has taken a change of plans. For Diedrich, whom I interviewed a few days before, he left this country.

He began as a child actor. Picked to play the title role in *Oliver* in 1961, the Welfare Department refused permission as he was only eight, but he did play 4 pence in *Oliver!* at demand in the 1966 revival of *Oliver* was the Angel Bulger.

He appeared in school productions and was in a few episodes of *The Incredible Mrs. Fox* series.

At seventeen, Diedrich staged a pirated version of *Man of La Mancha* (having taped the professional production), calling it *The Queen and Playing Don Quixote* himself.

A Commonwealth Scholarship took him to Melbourne University to study medicine, because his father wanted him to be a doctor. He failed this and frustrated wrote to play leaving companies in America. Unsuccessful in returning rights to *Cabaret* he got them for *Mousetrap*. Now a musical about the Marx Brothers.

For the last six months of my year at university, all I did was concentrate on getting *Mousetrap*. But I was sick, failed university and didn't go back.

To support himself Diedrich took a job cleaning out trunks, working in the T-Mart until 4pm, and then going straight to rehearsals of *Mousetrap*. This is which he played Groucho.

The main reason he put on the



John Diedrich in *The Queen and Playing Don Quixote*, his musical was to interest Ken Broderick in having it. The latter was due along Sunday night when they were rehearsing and talked to Diedrich.

I think I learned more in fifteen minutes talking to him than I could have learned at NIDA. I was going there to do the dancing course but *Mousetrap* dates got juggled up and I just couldn't do both.

Broderick saw the show and said "Yes, I liked you much but it's expensive."

Diedrich auditioned for *Grease* and

was asked to understudy... but declined. Then he was cast as Jenkins in a production of *Salad Days* at the St. Merton's.

"I was 19 when I did *Salad Days* and was pretty rough round the edges, but the thing I had then, that I still have now, is I want to use it, it was just unbridled raw energy." He had excellent reviews for *Salad Days* and was cast immediately afterwards for Harry Al Miller's production of *Grease* and again got good notices. "I

continued on page

thought 'This is just fine, it's going to be easy, sailing from here on'."

Then he tried to stage the American musical *The Big Sabbath*. Again it's

"That little Ira was me six years ago and I lost the lot. I got the biggest kick in the pants I've ever had, and that's when I really started to come to grips with this business as a profession and taking it very much step by step."

From time to time he appeared in episodes of the Australian TV series when the musical version of *Miss Pentimenti* of *Les Miserables* was staged. Dredrich was cast in the small but very testing part of Eglantine, and

came brighter. "It seems to always be the way with my career — the doors were into thearts, and then it started. It was something I'd dreamt of all my life to have a share of recognition in the arts, so I couldn't give that up, and couldn't give up my chance of playing in a TV series, so they both suffered."

It was whilst writing *Freedom* that Dredrich appeared in his first picture *The Devil's Playground*, his only other film has been *Blues* in which he played Dawn Harvey's husband.

"About six months after *Freedom* finished we started talking about *The*



26 and 40. *That man*, and this time I was casting. I rehearsed it whilst on holiday from Blues, so I could do both jobs. As we used to play it Fridays and Saturdays at midnight, there was no problem with doing Blues. Then as soon as Blues finished we started rehearsing the show to go into Her Majesty's."

To begin the show still when placed Her Majesty's, Dredrich had to relinquish a role he had been cast for in the first production of David Williamson's *My Club*, staged by the MTC.

The 26 and 40 *That man*, played in all capital cities and also went on a country tour.

"The 26 actually took up about two and a half years of my life from the

time we started writing it, about two years too long. We could never have done it, only we were helping it go to London."

It did play overseas — Hong Kong, from where Dredrich went to London for a holiday. Farley had been made into a TV special directed by Ted Derry, a friend of mine. London agent Barry Bennett met Dredrich on a visit to Australia.

"When I thought the 26 was going to England I rang Barry and asked if he would represent me. He said 'Hold on, I'm delighted to be doing some of my work on videotape' — and when we were over there I rang him and he said, 'I'm off to lunch and said, 'Are you still interested in working here?' I replied 'Oh yes, this is the first time I've been here I am' 'When do you leave?' 'Tomorrow' 'Can you see until Monday and audition for *Charlotte*?' 'You've got nothing to lose' 'So I did, and not only did I have nothing to lose, I got the part!' And then I got six work permits."

Dredrich is as much amazed as anyone that he reached his work permit from English Equity, especially as he has no English accents. However, it seems no one else wants anywhere near to his level of the auditions and had permission not been given for him to work in England the crucial night have been cancelled.

Is Dredrich likely to be another talent we shall lose permanently?

"At the moment all I'm looking at is going over there and doing *Charlotte* for as long as it goes, and if there's nothing in the offing I'll be coming back home, because I'm very pro-Australian and don't for a second believe that we are going to inherit what's going on over there."

Then who is he going?

Because it is the opportunities to be seen by important people and I think that in Australia I've reached the crossroads. I think it's mainly because the opportunities will never arise again. I really had the chance I would get to the MTC because that would be better for me, but that would be in the hope that I would get to London one day. You can't turn down something like this [it's] simple as that. But I want to come back because I think it's going to give more evening here within the next couple of years. It's going to get even better and I think it's (still) good over there."



From this he went into his first straight play — *Floyd George Aunty My Father*, which starred Ralph Richardson, from whom he advises he learned an enormous amount. But when the play reached Sydney he contracted glandular fever and had to leave the cast.

Then followed a mixture of stage and television roles, around this time Dredrich began to feel he was getting nowhere.

"And that's when John Elmos and I decided to write *Freedom* in 1975

which we did and had a success with."

Whilst *Freedom* was at the Australian South Bank he was cast for a lead in the TV series *Blues*.

"Then unfortunately both of them

Edgar Metcalfe: HOLE's New Director

By Dennis Madle

In England aged 30 Edgar Metcalfe had earned "a reasonable reputation in the repertory circuit" and decided he would like to travel. He accepted the post of artistic director at the Perth Playhouse and was rather disappointed not to find jungle growing round the airport when he arrived in 1963.

Over the years he has become a seasoned campaigner with two separate terms as director at the Playhouse, another as an associate director with the Melbourne Theatre Company, and various guest productions in Sydney, Adelaide and Perth interspersed with spells of work back in the UK.

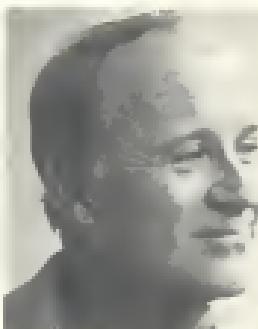
In 1974 he decided that jungle must jungle; he was going to make his home in Perth and in 1975 became an Australian citizen. In 1976 he was given the WA Citizen of the Year award and in 1978 he was made a Member of the General Division of the Order of Australia for his services to theatre.

During his initial four and a half years at the Playhouse Metcalfe gave Perth theatregoers the kind of theatre they wanted and which he knew so well - a good varied repertoire of imports, establishing a professional reputation for quality productions as good as any being done in Australia, as well as a considerable local following. During his second tenure (1979 and '80) a few Australian plays (by grace of government subsidies) were sneaked into the repertoire but it was still a risky proposition after conservative Perthites too much of the vernacular.

Metcalfe is now relishing the prospect of taking up the post of artistic director at Perth's Hole in the Wall next year (an appointment resuscitated last month) not least of all because it means he will be able to prove to critics of his programming that he can do Australian plays. Accordingly, he says his first season

there will be hardly slanted towards the work.

In fact in a sense could be said that as a theatre man in this country he has come of age with Australian drama. He saw the "wonderful" London production of *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* years ago and agrees that many in the English audience were rather perplexed by it. In contrast he has just read Williamson's latest *Traveling North*. "Apart from the geographical references," he said, "it's really international."



Edgar Metcalfe

Another myth he wants to dispel is the reputation he has acquired in recent years, not always of being exclusively a director of popular commercial shows. Those familiar with his Playhouse days recall first-rate productions of *Saints*, *Wives* and *Shakespeare*, but of late it has been a series of such shows as *Death in Venice*, *As You Like It* and *Measure for Measure* which have kept him in the public eye.

"People don't realize that one plays requires expertise. When I'm offered a commercial production I know it's because they believe no one else can do it as well - it's a compliment. But the same rules apply to any play. Without old-fashioned things like basic techniques of auditioning, of people not standing in front of each other and so on, no play will get across to the audience as it should."

A traditionalist by trade and training (not for him the novel-giving methodists, the disciples of Brecht or the unrepresentational purists) he believes in a director's theatre. But as both an actor and a director himself he has a quick and sympathetic identification with those on the other side of the footlights.

On his last visit to England this year he was especially impressed with the individual performances he saw in London theatres. "I felt it was some outstanding performances that I'd not really been aware of before. Donald Sinden in *Blithe*, two brilliant performances of *One of Us* at the National, Dorothy Tutin. I think it impressed me more because we don't see that so much here. It's not much's fault. People don't have the continuity of work they or not the courage to say 'this is my part, I'm going to play it to the hilt.' The Australian actor is still a little inhibited about that."

"Similarly, in England there are so many critics that someone is sure going to like you, but in Australia especially Perth, I've got along with a performance and the one or two critics both don't like it then you're damned. It's understandable that actors play safe."

Metcalfe's own particular trademark is an enormous underlying professionalism, whether it be in performances in *Castles in the Air* or *Pinter*, or a selection of sebaceous pantomimes, or in countless productions he has directed.

He has recently been appearing as the obnoxious Spouse in Stephen Harris's excellent production of *As You Like It* at the Playhouse and with James Heath, giving the kind of performances for which one isordinarily grateful. He is enjoying it too, possibly because it allows him a taste of the intellectualism that is denied him elsewhere. That again, it's not all a bad thing, he concedes, for the bass to have to stand up on stage for a change and put his money where his mouth is.

W.E.S.T. A Community Theatre Model

By Suzanne Spurrier

At the recent Dixon Hamer ballyhoo affair - the International Community Education Conference held in the tatty splendour of The Southern Cross Hotel, WEST Community Theatre were one of the participating arts groups. Of the theatre groups who participated they were the only group who took the heat of the Conference seriously.

In addition to performances of their most recent production - a rock musical for schoolkids in the Western region called *Raff Raff*, they held a workshop session on Community Theatre which was attended by delegates to the conference. At the workshop they presented an account of how they devised *Raff Raff* with some thirty year ten students at Buckley Park High School, they then went on to put forward a model for generating, script and performances with groups within the community using their work on *Raff Raff* as a case study. WEST's aim was to create a relevant, entertaining rock musical for fifteen year olds in Tasmania. The production was to be of, by, from and about those kids, the only decisions that the group had taken prior to meeting with the kids was that it wanted to incorporate rock music.

In the second part of the workshop Jan McDonald and Phil Spurrier presented from the *Raff Raff* script research process and put forward a model for script generation that could be applied to any group in the community. They came up with a seven point plan:

1. Contact the group the script is to be about and approach them with an idea making no secrets about the project. In the case of *Raff Raff* the more year ten at Buckley Park High School were briefed and of the many kids who participated in these three sessions, thirty elected themselves to work on it in detail.

2. Write your own slate clean, leave behind your own preconceptions about the group. Even though many stereotypes turn out to be true it is important to discover them afresh and for the people involved to come to them unsalted. The development of the group's own awareness at this stage is even more important than any theatre problem that may result, otherwise you run the risk of exploiting the group. At this stage it was important that WEST stated its own values as adults and outsiders.

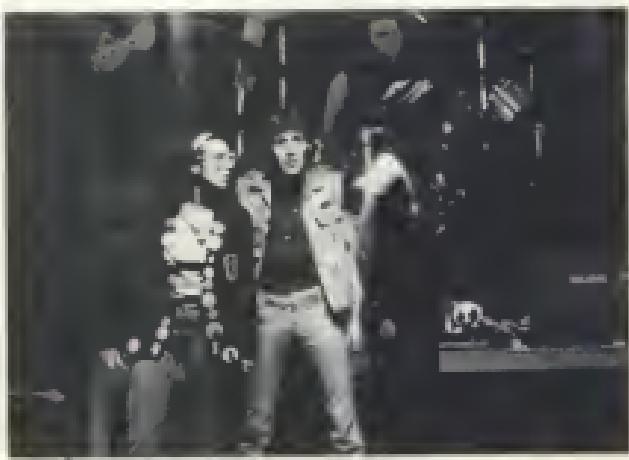
3. Gather ideas and impressions and put down lines and situations that come up, and observe the patterns of interaction. Regard your scripting task as the stage as one of stepping yourselves in the atmosphere. Your job is to expose and tease out the issues, from these the reversal themes of the show will come. After each workshop with the group review in detail what has happened outside amongst yourselves.

4. You are now in a position to make decisions about the theme, the form, work or skeleton on which to hang the events, and the style. Jan McDonald

stressed that it was important to make these decisions in that order. The content or theme had to be the most important thing and then the framework and style will separate themselves as a result. She stressed that you shouldn't make arbitrary decisions too early on, and that you must resist the panic feeling about what, if anything will eventually emerge.

In the case of *Raff Raff* the theme was what it is to be fifteen and living in Essendon. The framework became a rock dance that each of the characters were going to and the problems they encountered getting there. The style was to be impersonating with a documentary feel but would use allegory as well - the dance wouldn't be a real dance but a game led by a games master who in some way controlled the kids' lives. As the concentration span of the kids is relatively short, a decision was made to work on units and to move quickly between them making a series of short virtually self-contained, segments.

5. Translate all these decisions onto large sheets of butcher's paper, work on the floor and on the walls, not off



Raff Raff in a cast

desks and the typewriter. Use these pieces of paper like pieces of a jigsaw, rearrange them, get a visual, tactile sense of the structure. Make them into flow charts and put them on the walls, stick up photos, drawings, plans, objects etc — don't be afraid to move them about — but always keep everything in front of you.

In the case of *Roff Roff* these charts were divided into three main headings — parents, peers and relationships. Then more material was classified and added to each section. Fragments of interviews, phrases the kids had said, segments were taken from the video and written out and stuck on the wall together with things that the kids had written themselves. Everything you have collected must be put up — it can easily be rejected later. At this stage Jan and Phil were able to keep going back to the kids and ask them to write out scenes along the lines suggested by the charts.

6. Then one writer takes a section at a time and moulds it into a script. As each section is worked upon individually it is brought back to the group as a whole and the writing and ideas clarified and refined. In the case

of *Roff Roff* Jan and Phil were the joint writers and for the main part of the scripting process they worked apart from Jan and Linda who interacted in the final show.

7. Immediately type up what you have written — then becomes a script. Stick these pages up for every footscap page you've got two and a half minutes of your show. By putting up all the typewritten pages you will know at a glance how much of your play is there and what you haven't covered. By the end of this process you will have a first draft, but you will very likely be faced with one major problem — the ending. It is at this point that the writers must draw some conclusions which are their own as a result of their reflection on the group they have been working with, and these conclusions are not always things that the group can or will come up with themselves.

You now have a script which is pretty well there and you can begin working on it with the actors, once rehearsals begin the physical actions and stage directions to flesh it out will follow and have to be added. After outlining this procedure Phil, Linda

and Jan discussed the consequences of *Roff Roff* and working in this way with a particular group in the community.

For these kids *Roff Roff* broke a cycle of expectation — they did things their teachers never thought they could do, they took on responsibility for the material in the show and in so doing took on responsibility for their own lives. WEST helped them break a cycle of low expectation, but Jan stressed that WEST's moral responsibility to these kids is a serious one: there has to be the possibility for them to do more — WEST must help them start up a Youth Theatre in the region. If WEST doesn't follow up in this way, then they should never have released those expectations in the first place.

Finally WEST said that the community theatre model for group generated scripts was an important and subtle way of coming up with Australian material and even more importantly it would be material that the audience it is intended for, can relate to. Moreover such scripts can be adapted to other media — film, video and so open up material to a much wider audience.

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SHOWS

On Our Selection By George Whaley

Folklore is the collective traditional beliefs of a nation or group. One takes its subject matter mainly from a oral mythology, which has been orally and most impressively developed and propagated by a long line of verse and prose storytellers. Even a moderately stirring rendition of *The Man From Snowy River* will probably have your average computer programmer shaking with patriotism and when Australians have traditionally treasured stories of rural griminess with a dedication which is matched only by their reluctance to live in those country places where the myths were born.

Around the turn of the century Arthur Hope Davis, who wrote as "Skele Rudd", created a family, based upon his own, which took up a selection on the Darling Downs in south-eastern Queensland. The Rudd family assumed the folklorists. The stories were published in *The Selector* and in four "Selection" books. They are remarkable works. Rudd's literary style was selective in the extreme. He painted vivid pictures with a verbal economy and wit which sold vast numbers of the books in the first two decades of the century.

The books are still in print and we have revived the play.

In May, 1912, an Australian newspaper reported "There is a play running at the King's Theatre, Melbourne, to crowded audiences, which possesses the novelty of being truly native in the soil. (It) possesses that magic touch of human nature



Don Cawthron in *On Our Selection*

which never appeals in vain to the public. Many Australian plays preceded it, but none have printed such a wonderful drama as this simple exposition of the experiences of men who leave the cities and venture into the neighbourhood of the "Never-never land", and the moral is strong and healthy. "I cannot improve upon that columnist's turn of phrase — the appeal of the play, and the books, is perfectly explained.

Early this year when we were planning the 1979 Jane Street season a script entitled *On Our Selection* by Skele Rudd, arrived from Courtney Press. John Clark was enthusiastic because he saw its popular appeal, and I had fond memories of the books. Then I read the script. It was a weird

mix of primitive love, transparent melodrama and wailers, "savage bawlers". But there was also the occasional excellent scene, and some of the characters survived the transliteration from novel to play, and emerged unscathed and true to the originals. The strength of characterisation, the naïvety of the events described, and the remarkable conjunction of high farce and tragedy are the most impressive qualities of the Selection books. Enough of those qualities remained in the play to promise something good, and to send me back to a country childhood and the books.

It was obvious that, if we were to produce this most successful of all Australian plays, which ran somewhere in Australia and New Zealand from 1912 to 1928, and in London in 1929 and which gave two feature films directed by Ken G. Hall and starring Bert Bailey, some solid rewriting would be necessary. Theatrical expectations and styles change in half a century. Now there is a common failing among theatre directors, which is the lurking belief that they may be able to write at least as well as those playwrights whose work they have been succumbing to year by year. One of the reasons for this error of judgement is that directors spend a lot of (rarely) time assessing new songs and offering unelcome opinions to the writers. This often induces, in the director, a false sense of dramatical adequacy. I accustomed to that, and rewrote the play without the services of a real writer. But then I did have the books as well as the rough old script, and I have a background, and a father and a brother, among which the old bush story still counts for something. I used that experience, and had remarkable pleasure as the audience related to it. Skele Rudd would approve, I think.

We opened at Jane Street on June

20. We rediscovered "Family entertainment" on the same night. The audience age range during the season was remarkable. Small children and seniors responded in a way to gladden the heart of the hardest entrepreneurs. But our sort of subsidised Australian theatre is not really conditioned to the notion of success, possibly because it is a rare commodity. *On Our Selection* is Australian folklore, the characters would be "Australian characters" if there were such a thing, and it is a success. The *Yankee* management recognised that and we play there from November to January. The Trust was disinterested the Arts Council said it would not succeed in the country because it was too like country folk and would offend (which attitude I had offence and embarrassingly suburban) and the Adelaide Festival people liked it but could not afford to take twelve actors to Adelaide.

It turned out that the "Currency" script was one written from memory.

In the Melbourne actor and director J. Bertrand Basler. We then found Bert Bailey's daughter, Mrs. Doreen McLean who had her father's original production script. Eric Davis, Uncle Rudd's son, is sure that his father attempted a play called *On Our Selection* in 1911 and sent it to J.C. Williamson, who showed no interest. Bert Bailey then bought it, adapted it extensively and made it his own. Mrs. McLean asserts that Bailey started with the books and not a Stein Rudd script. We do not know who first had the idea of a stage version, but Bert Bailey certainly made a significant stage and film career out of the role of Dad.

I had a letter from America the other day from Arthur Burman who saw a CRT of the Jane Street production in Australia. Arthur played Joe in the original production in Sydney in May 1912. That was seven years before the Russian revolution. The play may last as long again.

When casting a play there is only one principle: "When in doubt get a good actor." If you cast well with intelligent, vivid and flexible actors who enjoy delighting, then at least half of the director's work is done. We have such a cast. The rest we say. The actors made an immediate imaginative connection with the characters. It would have been easy to caricature to confuse rustic innocence with congenital shrewdness, to demean the characters and so turn tragedy into parody. It would also have been easy to go for the nostalgia. Either mistake would demolish the play. The actors are too good for that. They recognised qualities which are rarely encountered in the willow trees and sporadic Australian version of star professions.

We all hope, and I must include Rudd and Bailey and Burman in that, that *Yankee* will be transferred to Sydney and that many thousands more Australians rediscover something about their roots. I think theatre should also be about that.



Karen Hopkins, Jim Staker, Eric Davis, Bertie and John Southern in "On Our Selection".

CHRISTMAS SHOWS

Cinderella — And Everyone Is Going To Have A Ball! By Pamela Ruskin

The Melbourne Theatre Company is really letting down its collective hair, stepping off its cosmopolitan path and giving us a real full-scale pantomime of the kind we haven't seen here for a long, long time. On December 19th the curtain will go up at the Athenaeum Theatre on *Cinderella* which has been written by English director Frank Hauser with music by Frank Hauser and of course directed by Frank Hauser.

The MTC's brochure calls it a "pantomime for adults" which is a pity because according to Frank, he



Noel Ferrier

should know, children too will love it. In England it played to hundreds of children as well as adults, and as it to emphasize this, he adds quite firmly, "It is not blue at all because I hate that sort of thing in a pantomime and it would spoil the whole other world feel of it. So as Christmas entertainment

here it is for all the family. In fact the MTC hopes to put in some extra matinees for the children."

Frank Hauser, one of England's most versatile and gifted stage directors first came to Australia in 1978 to produce *The Wizard of Oz* and *Jillaroo* for the MTC. On this visit he had already given us *The Alhambra* and in February will direct *Robin's Choice* for the company. He has a special affection for pantomimes. *Cinderella* is the third one, following on *Aladdin* and *The Merry Widow*. "I've just finished the book and music for a fourth one *Zool and the Beastress*."

It was however, *Cinderella* that captured the theatrical headlines. "I first put it on in Oxford when I was director of the Oxford Playhouse. That was late in 1977 early '78 and at the end of '78 I moved to the West End to the Prince Edward theatre with Twigg as Cinder. "What," I asked him, "made you even think of Twigg in the context?" "I didn't! That was Lord Elton! He was an instant for the kind of thing. She was marvellous. I never believed in star quality, but she had it. She had never appeared on stage before but she worked hard and never talked at all. She gave a very truthful performance. One critic said, 'She can't really sing, she can't really dance and she doesn't really act either but she doesn't put a foot wrong.' She was really magical."

Hauser's *Cinderella* sticks very closely to the fairytale with just a secret twist near the end. All the usual characters are in it including Buttons, the Fairy Godmother, the Ugly Sisters, the Prince and so on. There are two acts and lots of scenes, about fourteen musical numbers and two poems.

Frank has assembled a superb cast for this show. The only unknown quantity is *Cinderella* herself. "I was looking for a girl about eighteen and it is difficult to find one that age who has had a lot of experience. I auditioned a lot of girls and chose Jane Seale who is new to the MTC, but has appeared on

Young Talent Time, sings and dances well and is pretty. The Ugly Sisters make a marvellously丑恶 pair. Frederick Pardoe is the mean and nasty one and Noel Ferrier is the garrish and covetous. We have one scene that is a Western which is very funny. It almost stopped the show in the London production. All the costumes for this are repeats Western too, in this scene. Fred Pardoe is Calum, Ned and wears a very Naughtily Nineties kind of costume with a leather belt and



Noel as Ugly Sister

Noel is a kind of Marlene Dietrich type as she was when she sang "The Boys in the Back Room".

"In this pantomime there are very few sequentials because I like the feeling that it all happened in Never-Never Land long ago. The clothes are mostly all 18th century, but the Western scene is an exception. In Oxford I had two Australians in the cast and three in London. The third was Rob Murray whom I'm sure you've seen many times. Austra, because of the ahh Australian note crept in at a time when I had no idea I'd be doing it in Australia, but I won't tell you what it is, except to say it brought the house down."

The music for the pantomime is fairly simple and there are some very tuneful songs. Jonathan Hards is Gumpit, the villain who sings a number, "I'm the King of the Castle". He's a very villainous villain. Noel Ferrier sings a song specially written for the Melbourne production called, "Men! Men! Men!" and in the Western scene, Fred (Calum) Salt Pardon sings "Calamity, Sal!" David Rutherford is the Baron, a slightly

works inventor who has invented a marvellous three-metre high machine that has been made at the props department. "It's pure Heath Robinson," says Frank and the children, in particular, will love it. Because David has such a very good voice I've written a special number for him. *Star Little Home*. Snicks is the broker's man and he and the baron are both corny, and he's the tall jinn character."

All this time there's been no mention of the Prince. "He will be played by David Dower who is a very good looking. The Fairy Godmother is Sandra Gray who has the particular ability to fill her with deep voice with the sound of laughter and also great warmth. The Queen Mother is Bette Robbie and the Prince's and Pandemus are Roger Quilter while Buttons will be played by Gary Dunn." "What exactly is Gimbil's role?" "He's a new character I invented. He's not in the fairy tale. As I said, he's the villain. He's the Prince's uncle who will return if the Prince doesn't marry by the end of the week. At one stage things look bad and Buttons exclaims 'Don't tell me we're going to have an unhappy ending. There are six children in the cast which means we have to have twelve so they can alternate and as well as the two



Fred Penner as Gimbil

ponies, we have of course, a coach and a pumpkin."

One of the things that puts a lot of people off pantomime is the screaming that goes on in moments when one of the characters asks the children to shout out loads if the villain is near.

which is all right occasionally but not when it goes on all the time. Hauser's *Cinderella* is not like that, but it does involve the audience. He tells me that "the essence of good pantomime is getting the whole audience into the children's frame of mind so there is a tremendous involvement through the music and the whole magical feeling of it. It all looks very exciting and lovely and you just believe that anything can happen, but when it does it must have a kind of logic and there must be an element of suspense. The production can never be static and the audience mustn't be allowed to sit there passively. So the idea is that story must move and the audience must be actively involved and concerned about what's going to happen."

The production is quite elaborate. In London we had a full orchestra which is very expensive. We're going to manage with a band of four musicians. Robert Dunn is the Musical Director and Colette Mann who choreographed the dance at the end of *West Side Story* is doing the choreography and producing the dance numbers. You'll be surprised at how well the cast cope with both the singing and dancing. The costumes are quite elaborate and apart from in the *West Side Story* many of the characters wear green and purple wigs. We only use the full depth of the stage during the Ballroom Scene and it manages to look enormous. Expenses? Well, I suppose so. In England, there are hardly any full-scale pantomimes and more because of the cost. You need singers, dancers and an orchestra so there's usually only one big one a year."

Frank says that conditions of work with the MTC are better than those in England in many respects. "The reason for this is because the MTC has the whole operation under one roof. Costumes are made, scenery is built and rehearsals all go in the company's workshop in South Melbourne so you don't find that just when you with a couple of cast members to run through a number, they're off in another part of the city, having a lolly. You don't lose people here and there's no time lost. There are not many companies with these facilities. Altogether I'm very impressed with the standard here. I had no more problems with the very

difficult lines of *The Abbernethy* in the U.K. It was difficult here and it was difficult there and I think, the company did very well. As far as *Cinderella* is concerned, I'm delighted at this stage. The cast is really very talented and Pandemus and Penner are really going to have audiences roaring with laughter."

Awarded a CBE for his work in the theatre in 1968, Frank, who was born in 1922, has been a freelance director and producer since 1971 and expects to remain one. "It has an element of



Fred Penner

uncertainty, but it is less wearing and less strain. Before I came out here this year, I toured Frederick Lonsdale's *Caravan Serpentines*. Sue with Nelly Dawn Penner. We had trouble getting a caravans that would be sure to sing. In the first act, it isn't supposed to sing at all. Well, we got out that would sing but it started in the first act and wouldn't stop. We managed in the end but it was quite a problem."

So many people in Australia go away for Christmas, that companies have tended to ignore the Christmas spirit and our theatres haven't really given us a great deal of gaiety at this time. As *Cinderella* will run throughout the school holidays until February 2nd, and most people only go away for two or three weeks, the MTC should be able to count on full houses a good part of the time even with extra matinées. Subscription bookings sell the seats but do not necessarily fill them. This time with a ridiculous romp like *Cinderella* we should all be able to enjoy a very happy Christmas time."

CHRISTMAS SHOWS

The Virgin — A Nativity Play By Pamela Ruskin

Murray Copeland is an academic turned theatre man and from someone with his background of scholarship could have created this play. For longer than the Hoppla Theatre will have existed Christmas attraction. It had to be written by someone who had studied medieval English and the old miracle plays so perhaps a little information about the shaved-headed Scot is relevant.

He doesn't sound like a Scot because "my parents tried to bring me up without an accent, wiping it out along the way." So there's just a soft bare that sounds more English than anything else. He studied English literature at Oxford but even then was interested in theatre and before he graduated appeared in plays there. He became a teacher of English Literature and in 1960, went out to the Sudan and spent four years teaching at

the University of Khartoum which he loved.

Then he went to the University of Toronto, lecturing in English literature until 1967. I was on my way to Cairo when the Six Day War broke out so I went to Tahiti for a year instead. Did I like it? No! The humidity was terrible and after a year I had enough. In 1969 I came out to Australia. I was moving straight from the academic life to the theatre. I taught drama under Wal Gammie at Flinders University in Adelaide and I began to do quite a lot of acting with companies around Adelaide."

As well as acting, Murray was writing and directing. "I directed a medieval play while I was at Flinders called *Gasparus*. It wasn't religious but a bawdy, wild, humorous collection of sketches put together into a set. I designed it too. It had never been translated before so that was rather a challenge. It was put on during the 1974 Adelaide Festival and was very successful and then the MTC gave it a brief run as one of their Triumphant productions last year."

At this point Murray decided that he had had enough of the academic life. He resigned from Flinders and in 1975 went back to England and then to Europe to think about his future. He

wanted to cross the bridge from the safe, tranquillity, secure life of the university to the precarious life of the theatre. "I decided to make the change. I came back to Australia the following year and to Adelaide where I was thought of as an academic, but to Melbourne. It took two years for me to get anywhere at all and I've had to reduce my standard of living drastically."

He was the lead in a one act play, a mini opus, called *The Six Days* put on by the Victorian State Opera as part of a season of contemporary music theatre. Then he was commissioned by them to write a short play called *The Apology of Frost*. I did it in a similar series and he did the new translation for the Vic Opera's production of *Orestes* in the *Centenary* and now came an MTC play-reading of a play otherwise called *The Miser*.

"My first real breakthrough was a play of mine called *Power For Health*, produced by Hoppla Upstairs at the Playbox. I've been working more or less continuously since then for Hoppla particularly directing plays aimed at school leaving audiences *Antigone* and *Medea* among them.

The advantages of having a director playwright with a solid intellectual background in literature are obvious and Caitlin Gammie and Graeme Blundell at Hoppla were very close to realising this.

And so to *The Virgin — A Nativity Play*. Murray says it's "my first major work. I put the script together from a whole lot of medieval miracle plays all connected with the Nativity. Originally these miracle plays were little one act plays and I have chosen some and woven them together into a continuous narrative play in two acts. The play is focused on the figure of Mary and the play begins with her betrothal to Joseph and ends with the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem. There are a lot of medieval legends all attached to the Virgin Mary, woven into these little medieval plays and I've used some of them. Some are quite strange and not known at all today. These plays elaborated the characters quite a lot. Some saw Joseph as an old hunchback carpenter who never wanted to get married at all. He was very suspicious when Mary got pregnant and it wasn't until the Angel came down and



Rehearsal of "The Virgin"



Marion Copeland, director of "The Fugue"

explored the miracle to form that he imagined her story. That's the Joseph of my plan."

There is quite a lot of humour in these plays and Murray has tried to bring this out. He says that he has tried to keep in the medieval references but "I have updated words and phrases that simply wouldn't be understood by modern audiences. I hope I've done it discreetly and kept the medieval flavor. There is quite deliberately a clash of styles. Medieval text, 18th century harpsicord music, 18th century costumes, some with a slight pioneer Australian feel about them. The armours and swords designed by Steve Nolan who has worked with the MTC, and in September designed the Victoria State Opera's *Anna Karenina*.

The reason that Marion Copeland has this mixture of styles in *The Fugue* is based on the miracle plays themselves. He says that these plays were very sophisticated and witty and their writers, for instance, used a lot of disturbing anachronisms. While the shepherds, for example, are travelling to Bethlehem for the birth of Jesus, they will swear by a heretic's cross and when Mary and Josephine have been born they are baptised by a bishop. This was deliberate. That's what they were doing. They were trying to develop the double puns happening simultaneously - the time of the nativity and their own time. These plays are attractive to people today because they come from an age of secure religious faith and people today feel very nostalgic for that. The 15th century costume is vivid and the 19th century costumes have reflected a similar period of secure religious faith."

The Fugue is playing in the main auditorium of the Playhouse and will run until December 19th. Carolyn will play both Joseph and the sheep herder. Mark and Margaret Cameron will play Mary and Mary's wife, Jill, a double-billed doubling of parts. Harold Bawden will play the First Shepherd and Peter Ford Gabrial. The other parts are minor. There's a cast of some 150. Churches and church organisations will be encouraged and Murray hopes that *The Fugue* will attract religious members of the community as well as atheist regulars. She may or may not be religious.

TRUE FAIRY



Julie Holmshaw
Phillip Corben Colin Gibson
In
WINDSURFERS DO IT STANDING UP



Theo Stephens is SUPERMAN

Superman Your Life and Times
would like to thank
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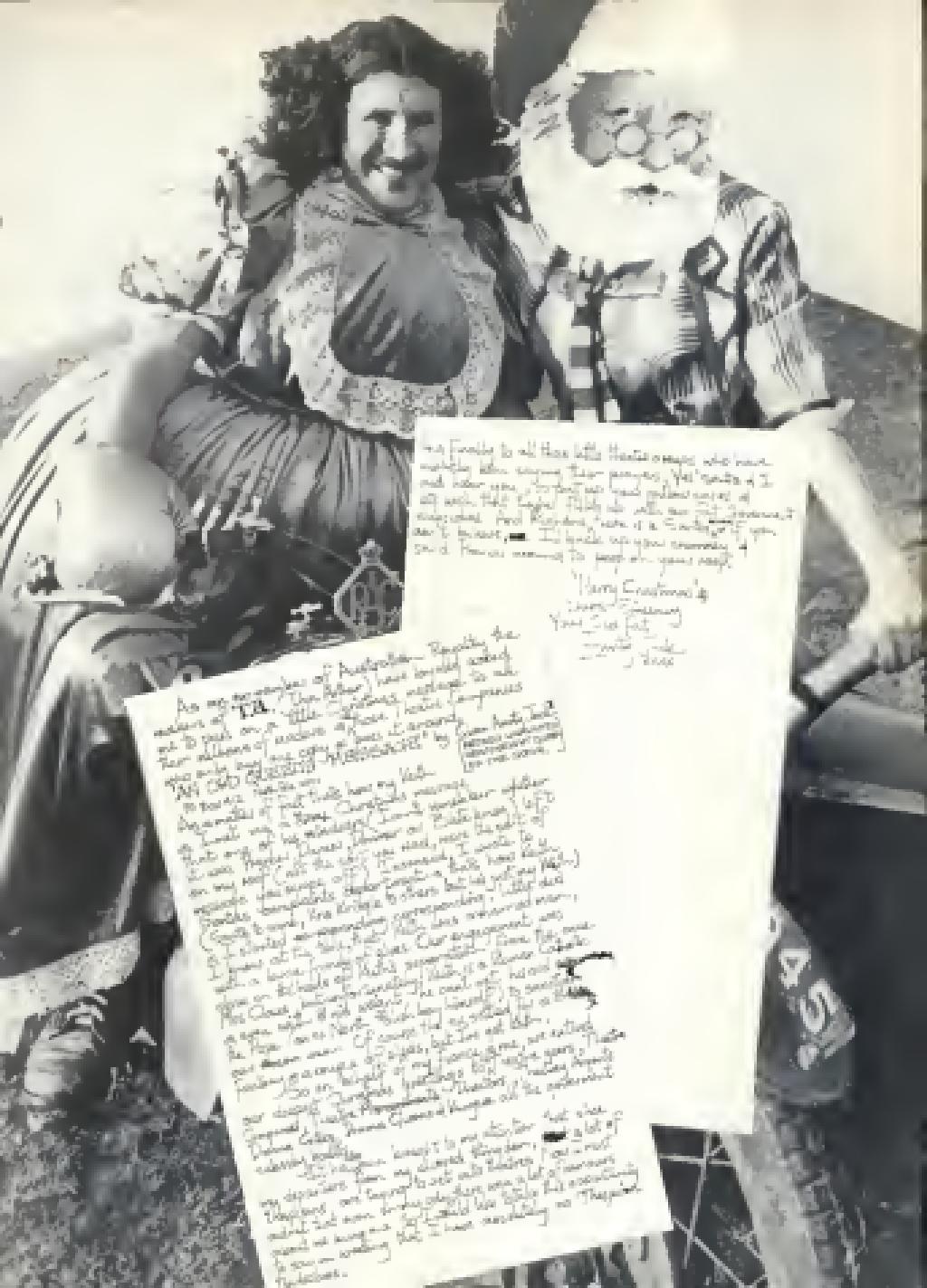
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the Faculty to all those little Hesitationists who have
anything like courage their parents yet make a
real effort now to do their best and go to the top of
it all. Tell them I say this with all my heart.
Remember, friend Hesitation, there is a Graduation if you
don't graduate. I think that you can succeed. I
would however like to point out that you must

Very cordially
Yours etc etc

NIDA KEY TO THE DOOR?

NIDA was twenty-one years old this year, having been established in 1958 under the auspices of the University of New South Wales and the Elizabethan Theatre Trust. The National Institute of Dramatic Art is still the best and most respected training establishment for theatre practitioners, but its future is that is looking dicey, and without substantial help soon decidedly grim.

The exams hats on the NSW University campus which contain NIDA are remarkably almost unimpeachable, probably because I had rehearsal rooms consist of five classrooms, of which the largest is 30 ft. 15' apart and nine feet high. This year they have been training a total of 100 students, this means a maximum class of fifteen first year students have space for a couple of jump either way and because they have to beg time at the University gate. Classes have to be taken in half groups because of the cramped conditions. A high percentage doubles the amount of teaching necessary.

The two workshops are scarcely tiny indeed downright dangerous in terms of fire-hazard, and the design rooms have scarcely enough space for the two to eight students to draw let alone construct models. En route there is also shown the modest designer's office, a lavatory five by four feet and the hole in the floor that students drilled so the cane water will drain away on wet days.

John Clark, director of NIDA, has a comparatively acceptable office in the

pleasant administration building, the "Whitchurch", but talks of a growing change of attitude among his staff.

"Up to a few years ago everyone was aware of the discontent, but tended to put up with it, they're now so vocal but if you looked around the country there were no other schools and most theatres were no better off than us. But since that time things have changed radically. Now you look around and practically every theatre which are all taking our graduates is in imminent being all. We're giving the big arts centres which are not lavish, but reasonably equipped, and we can't teach people the skills they're going to need to work in these places. *Between* has either already had its influence at WAAT, TMDA and the Victorian College of the Arts, and how very little about their standards at the moment but they're better housed than they are now. It's beginning to get very irritating."

Their lack of facilities will doubtless start to affect the intake of students at NIDA. The Centre of Performing Arts at Adelaide has surveyed stage management whether run by Bill Guest who taught at NIDA until 1975 and which took in 160 students this year. The result has been that there are no applicants this year to study technical theatre at NIDA from Adelaide.

If people are being well trained in Adelaide, then theoretically it doesn't matter, as Head of designing Louise George Whaley points out, but what

we are worried about is our facilities dropping so far behind that the ones who do come here will not be adequately trained and not only technically, but in acting. You can't talk about training actors without taking into account their use of a certain sort of space. We don't have spaces adequate to proper voice and movement training. We always make do, and we turn out excellent graduates, but it's having to make do."

Indeed, it is becoming increasingly obvious that any theatre of less than 1,000 seats is quite uncommercial for a major subsidised company. With present economic pressures there is quite likely to be a clamp down on funding for many small theatres and larger theatres and cultural centres are springing up in every major centre right through to Alice Springs. Actors who have not been trained to work in large spaces may find the going very tough.

Whaley and Clark cite the original NIDA production of *Down's Past*, the actors in which found the Parade a big step from Flinders Street, and third year students who tour to Newcastle, finding the 200 seat theatre there, enormous.

And what is NIDA's position with its theatres? Since the demise of its original in Old Fort, NIDA has released the old Tolstoy Building Theatre for the use of University students, in return for the Parade Theatre on the Western campus. But

Continued over page



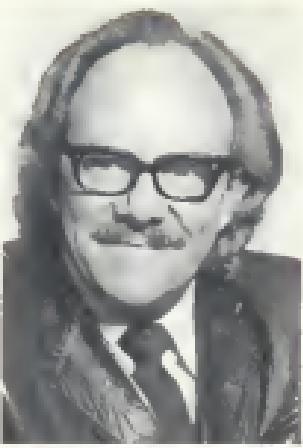
they cannot use the Parade as yet, not until some money can be found, and from John Clark's description its present state is incredible for a theatre so recently inhabited by a major company.

"All the equipment, lighting and sound, is old and worn out, the sound system is a valve one and the lighting patch panel is downright dangerous. The male plugs in it have 240 volts running through them, so you can't give students permission to use them. The lighting system has no safety locks, no counter balance or break checks, it would only take one student to unite the wrong line and you could drop a dozen lights on someone's head. The lot had no own trained technicians but that's not good in a teaching theatre. We've requested funds from a number of sources to make the place safe and usable. We could make it now but once you get them and start using it people won't take any notice, so I refuse to use it until it is safe."

The tiny Jane Street Theatre has been leased by the University of NSW for NIDA, since 1966 and was set up originally by a £6000 Gulbenkian Foundation grant. Now the theatre has been sold, the University declined to pay it for NIDA and the Federal Government wouldn't support the State Government who were agreeable to it. They have some hope of hanging onto Jane Street for teaching purposes and the yearly professional season, if only because everything in the theatre - seats, raking, stage lighting - all belongs to NIDA, but it doesn't help their present feeling of precariousness.

But NIDA recognises that a decent theatre is crucially its present workshop facilities are too small to build adequate scenes for the Parade. Vice Chancellor Myer of NSW has said that he hopes to see NIDA housed completely on the Woolstonecraft campus around the Parade, but so far no action has been taken. What scares the staff is the thought of being spread-eagled across campus or even city with the theatre units from workshops and administration somewhere else. Not only would it make life impossible with the tight timetable they keep, but such dispersion was a major factor in the death of the *Tote*.

NIDA's relationship with the authorities who will determine their



John Clark

future is one with very little power. The institution lives in the University of NSW's rent free and receives hidden subsidies through cleaning and meal services, but the University based responsibilities today. And of course universities themselves are undergoing serious cutbacks at present.

Like many subsidised theatre companies, NIDA is a compact run by a committee as such is used to be funded by the Australia Council but now receives a direct grant from the Terrier Education Conference (who most originally and subsequently took over their funding without making any stipulation as to standard or type of training). The snag is that their budget couldn't be much expanded while under the Australia Council, which does not give capital grants, and the move to the Education Commission coincided with cutbacks in capital funding there. In 1972 there had been the possibility of some capital funding through the Australia Council, which was incorporated in its "reserves upon" phase. NIDA had brought Norman Dry from England, who reported to the Council that NIDA's accommodation was a disgrace but in the minute report put through it was 1974 and the Dry report, though, had been goaded.

NIDA has been in a difficult position over best interests. A consistent attitude to plea for help has been "If you're doing so well, why change?",

while massive financial failure such as the Australian Opera's series did little to dissuade and private sources alike. It is too easy for the authorities to take advantage of an excellent staff who are committed to the work they are doing.

But John Clark believes that morale is dropping and a long-term pessimism setting in. "We would like to see an exciting future with the Parade and keeping our associations with the University of NSW, but we unwillingly now have to consider other alternatives. Macquarie University has for some time wanted us to move out there and be close to the Film and Television School, we refused before because it is so far out, and away from theatrical activity, but we may have to think again."

Another tragic situation is that UNSW teaches music and drama, but won't give us the facilities. Sydney University has neither, but has an empty building - the Seaview Centre. It's a beautiful building and it has been suggested that NIDA might be interested and we think we probably are. Whatever happens though, NIDA has to change and very soon. A school that is going to keep in touch with the profession is going to have to change and alter with it."

Perhaps the ultimate tip of a drama school is when its graduates take back with them into the business. The last few famous actors who started their careers at NIDA are, of course, and reuniting all the time. To pick a very few it includes from the very first year names like Peter Cookman, Robyn Nevin, through to Helen Morse, Judy Morris, Kate Entwistle, Angela Peacock, Mel Gibson and Judy Davis. Lynne Sharman is based in the Technical Production course of 1962, and later Rob Cromphons and Terri O'Donnell. John Bell's dancing sister had its beginnings while teaching at NIDA, and of course Clark and administrator Elizabeth Fletcher have. Between them ran the 1976 Sydney Theatre Company season.

It would though, be most disingenuous to believe that NIDA can continue as essential contribution to the theatre without some consideration from the authorities of how much has to be put in, in order that the performing arts profession can go on taking out.

WRITER'S VIEW

JACK HIBBERD

THE AUSTRALIAN PLAYWRIGHT

What distinguishes him or her
implies the keen mind
from Ameliehans, Strindberg,
Pavlova, or Wedekind?

Can it be gum leaves in the hair,
the Kodak-like jaw,
the paranoia, the despair,
a country the world's floor?

Can it be lack of technique,
or experience,
a tradition, from the First Fleet,
or El Dorado's stench?

Can it be we are innocent,
and expect too much?
Do we clamour for a Rembrandt
before we've felt death's heat?

Do we imitate day by day,
all smugger hell?
Only exploration will say
and only time will tell.

Burke started from the littoral in,
we'll still create. Voss
inside creativity sings,
find it or we are lost.

SONG OF THE ADMINISTRATOR

I have the numbers on the Board,
Sir Sylvester Zinc is my man,
what he says goes just like the Law
that's how the theatre operates

I rule artistic policy
the director's an addlepate
who confuses art with quality
that's how the theatre operates

Occasionally I meet the staff,
in the corridor when they're late,
advise with a loan or overdraft,
that's how the theatre operates

Actors I've seen come and go,
like livestock through a set of gates,
we always get enough per show,
that's how the theatre operates

As long as the houses are full,
we top up last year's aggregate,
I will cap meet the critics' bull
that's how the theatre operates

I have a knighthood in my sights,
to show the postmen how I rate,
that people crave their theatre critic
that's how the theatre operates

The lowest denominator,
the smart way to manipulate,
give them shit, they're sure to applaud
that's how the theatre operates

Draw it up and work them to death,
wear dinner suits, ingratiate
the foyer's full of three-car wits
that's how the theatre operates

SONG OF AN ACTRESS

Bury me with Thersites' best,
the distaff of a wench,
I've always been envious of heart,
a little on the nose,
too fond of vic quags
for Cressida's part.

Bury me in a widow's weeds,
or a charlatan's hat,
I've finished both Pistol and Nym
from Liverpool to London,
I've played bards and bogs
to brilliantened kings

Bury me in a muckwife's caulk,
the burlap of a show,
I boast a cozenmonger's voice,
a bull broid at Nepal,
eat oysters, beerstew,
and amateur boys

Bury me as Juliet's nurse
in a cybist's grave,
I want no fear to lament
across my one-wreath hearse
I never once gave
a false performance

Bury me in a bag of beet,
beneath some theatre's plants
Samson up Caliban and Watt,
a whole company to cheer
me with lecherous peaks
one last night of sport

NOTE TO DAVID WILLIAMSON

David, while you were a Professor at Aarhus, Jutland, Denmark
did Australasian veritable egghead matto knife
you in the back?
No such plot, though they'd hardly have
the gall face to face
not only are you our most successful, you're
the tallest, matto
Treachorous views are explicable, however
given Howard and I, ha,
and you did once say absurdism is something
worked off in youth
It thus be fact some of us are the kindergartners
of the century,
and will have to wait epochs, as in Gideot,
for adult philosophy,
Yet I wouldn't let me embitter, they bad
from more parapets,
and the press is hardly cruel — every second play
is your best yet
I hasn't seen or studied your latest work,
That's why, Youch
though Len Radis claims, and you imply
a more experimental course,
it's composed a series of thirty-seven semitenuous scenes
one so uncharacteristically brief it's almost
gone before it's been
The unShakespearean techniques, plus the teeth
fables you invent
could force many a loyal Melbourne back-slapper
Sydney-wards, to repeat
Still, David, consider those whose plays have
often been fragmented,
who do not see the universe as it purports to be
represented
John Romani, for example, whose excellent
1971 *Mrs. Thibault* /
lets nothing in a dinner unheralded by any pretense
or even fake, prone to precious pauses and
caricatured verbiage
is there only one way to integrate our absurdly and stage?

OPENING NIGHT

I liked the sets, the lights, design
thought the performances just great,
that the play expanded the mind,
up until twenty-five past eight.

I go to a play full of hope
to the clubs for definite kicks
to culture I'm socially raped,
now that I'm revolting rich

I always doze through the last act
thump my hands at the curtain call,
talk of the show, marionette fact,
how'd the cast remember it all?

My wife invariably dresses well,
angles her dentures at the press,

I pop by the bar, what the hell
if I missed a few nuances?

Now the levels I enjoyed,
the acrobats, blue jokes and smells,
I am just a working-class boy
pretending to be someone else

II

I loved the sets, the lights, the design,
thought the acting near RSC,
could not detect our where of time,
we're no longer a colony

The leading man could eloque,
his vowels were crooked, Oxford
though I believe he hails from Tumut,
and has never ventured abroad

The gestures were fine, never coarse
the dresses well-cut, elegant
though one actress struck like a horse
she'd hardly studied deportment

The cast was all-Australian,
the director clearly Brush,
hence the elegance and class,
the total lack of borbomism

I sat, backstage, the best champagne,
swung them round to my house,
out of costume, they all seemed strange,
and talked in adenoidal howls

LETTER TO BIECHT

Dear Bert, I trust this letter discovers you
only partly decomposed,
that your black forest is really cypress green,
that from where you came
you'll one day, an unconstructed Azalea, return
As you may have gathered
things are not too stable on this volatile globe
warm ceramic glaze,
pure power by the hour adopts another neck neck,
machines thrash out lies,
it grows more difficult for the plain bloke to think
The masters, in fear, in awe
survive of Turgenev's strong grey burrascab,
those who have no choice
Watch strategists and tricks delineated in *The Prince*
Still, then do your plays,
in classes of the culinary arts, or monastic ideals,
and sugar your bitter songs
Bert, you should've been a politician, or pure poet,
the theatre has been your curse
The world's exactly, comically, tragically, the same,
and it's not your fault
that the bastards and bitches will not listen
In the not too distant future
another Hitler or harder Stalin could dance upon your
grave,
your tests already irrelevant

THEATRE/NSW



State Rep/Lucy Wagner

Superlative

THE VENETIAN TWINS

By Robert Page

The Twins from a musical by Mark Knight and Barry Flanagan based on the play by Goldoni. Sydney Theatre Company presents Sydney Drama Theatre, Opera House, Sydney, NSW. Opened 16 October 1989. Director John Bell. Musical Director, David Collier. Designer, Michael Furtach. Lighting, Graham Murray. Casting, Lynne Elliot. Repetition, Lynne Elliot. Stage Manager, Lynne Elliot. Production Stage Manager, Stephen Ropati. Costume Designer, Lynne Elliot. Assistant Costume, Anna Bryson. The Judge, John Flanagan. Right, Mrs Lovett, Lynne Elliot. Tomato, Dame Farina, Penelope, Jan Evans. Beatrice, Jennifer McGregor. Flora, Tony Sheldon. Ute, Tony Taylor. Accessories, Anna McVernon. Musicians, Stephen Ropati, Lloyd Nishman. Wardrobe Assistant, Garry White. Technical Director, Michael Auld.

In a mixed season of Sydney Theatre productions, Nirimrod have produced the acute and grande finale for the interim Sydney Theatre Company John Bell's *The Venetian Twins*. This is also a culmination to date of the best of the "Nirimrod classic" style updating archaic within the spirit of the original and adding wit and exuberance. Another of its attributes is the strong and creative contribution from the whole production team, and the success of *Venetian Twins* is due to a good number of people.

Mark Knight's translation from Goldoni has preserved the basic of the original story, but turned the form into a musical comedy with more Brightonian dialogue, and much of the exposition in the lyrics. Consequently it is concise and witty with some delightful turns of phrase and some very appropriate corn while the songs are written in suites of a vast range of styles, with commendable variety.

Many one component can be singled out as the major element of the show it is perhaps Terence Clarke's music, composition and direction. The quartet played with panache his brilliant patches score which ranges through Groucho, Becht, Petron, Sondheim, Anou et al. The musical jokes were as clever as the verbal ones and at the same time produced song after song of hummable tune and tapable rhythm. The other great quality of the songs was that they were written specifically for the range and limitations of each actor and in the main the cast are actors with varied singing ability, rather than vice versa.

Drew Forsythe as the twins is of course at the crux of the matter. The identical twins, separated from birth and up to us Verona together, unknown to each other, both to get married. Naturally these paths cross and continue causes Forsythe's performance as Tomato, the bright brother, was based on Derek Caylor (*Painted in Please See*) — as was John Bell's in *The See* — and in such task, on each

entrance, the applause meant for the exiting character is his own. As Zanetto the bumptious Australian (who he was much more endearing and his song "Going Back To Judywarroobuck" became the theme of the show) in view of this it is unfortunate that Knight has not altered the ending where, as in the original Zanetto is presented and Tomato triumphs over his master and thwarted love. Were it not for the somewhat anti-climatic finish there would certainly have been a standing ovation on first night, but the double death (the villain also dies) is somewhat inappropriate and death-redundant.

Jennifer McGregor as Beatrice was the other star of the evening. As well as her beautiful singing voice she is now developing into a consummate comic actress, her imitation Tosca was the highlight of the production as she raged and posed and sang her heart out.

Bell has a pre-cast but drawn superlative performance from his actors. Anne Bryson was an ideal contrast to McGregor, and Tony Sheldon played the (foiled) romantic love in masterful Coward, (in this "I'm no coward", "You're Not Coward" — you don't look like him), but was another casualty of the impulsive ending. Being left partners, Jan Evans couldn't have been sicker at the thought of Tomato, and Tony Taylor brought some commanding APCs to the part. John McVernon, padded comically, was a bumbling Arlecchino and the most absurd chores in a marvelously mixed Gypsy number with McGregor and Sheldon.

Stephen Curran, only a year out of NIDA impressed greatly with his acts and commanding musical co-ordination. A rare finds from the Drama Theatre stage right now the audience achieved a new intimacy, with audience seated on three sides and actors using the auditorium galleries and "back stage" for different areas and to watch scenes in which they were not taking part. It solved the postage slot problem at a stroke.

Grahame Murray's complex but unobtrusive lighting plot worked in strongly with the patriotic style, transforming the atmosphere from earthy backbiter to dream to flora, with subtlety and ease.

It's a show which, despite Grahame's reservations, should attract general superlatives. It once more proves Nirimrod to be top company and will be a hard act for Richard Wham's Sydney Theatre Company to follow.



Jennifer McGregor, Tony Sheldon, John McVernon, Drew Forsythe, Anne Bryson and Lynne Elliot in Nirimrod's Venetian Twins. Photo: Bruce Gurne

Worthless script

TREATS

By Lucy Wagner

Based on Christopher Hampton's *Blame*, *Treats* has the edge of a bad, derivative, formulaic, *Death Wish* (1974). Peter Finch, Baden Powell, Barbara Jefford, Peter Finch, Deborah Watling, Alexander D'Arcy, Alan Badel, etc.

In his review of the original Royal Court production of *Blame*, Sandy Wilson, an otherwise great fan of Christopher Hampton, queried the apparent lack of humor and director went playing on the audience. The Hunter Valley Theatre Company's production leaves one similarly bewildered. What appeal did director Peter Barclay see in this bungled three-hander "couched" and why did the company (a Board of local amateur directors) choose it to close their 1979 season?

The several mangy snakes again but this time not a dental flosser, and now the now Peter has moved in with Anna while Barbara is on a business trip. Dave is a loud and grating myopic president, Patrick is a quiet and bumbling bureaucrat, Anthony an importuner and takes an equally passive role in the drama. These generalized descriptions are as the characters are written: broad and without foundation.

Robert Alexander and Alan Badel work hard, needlessly overplaying to extract any humor from the lines. Deborah Watling does that convincingly. The plot though circular is badly constructed to the extent of several scenes where a character does nothing but listen to a



Alan Badel, Christopher Hampton and Deborah Watling in RHTC's 'Treats'. Photo: John Ropponen

record or watch television. It is also predictable to the point of boredom within the first few minutes. The most interesting moments are listening to the bits of the scenes which link the scenes. Anthony Hobson has designed an

atmospheric set of bare-camouflaged for the tiny Badel and Watling, the whole production is as tidy and precise as Patrick's housekeeping. How odd that so much effort by so many should have been wasted on such a worthless script.

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Fails effortlessly

THE MAN WHO CAME TO DINNER

By: Richard P. Ellerby, Jr.

Mr. Bill John from Arkansas, by phone, and George A. Rutherford, Chairman and Director, Los Angeles, California.

John George and Elizabeth Price (John George and Elizabeth Price, 1866)

As they like *China To China* is one of those plays which although fairly popular some time ago, I do not appear now to be in demand only to a small audience peculiar to actors and actresses who like to dress themselves in representing the great media personalities of the recent past.

You have to be over 50 in Canada and the time of history. In particular, I marvel at the history, gazing about the beautiful people of the 1930s, which comprises much of George S. Kaufman and Moss Hart's 1939 *Playhouse*. You have to be a victim of unceasing development not to want to visualizations ("placeholder"). "Mrs. Helpmann" and she has to be a widow immediately a plain will, that is, an author abandoned at the end.



For more information, contact Dr. Mark H. Hansen at (800) 336-4723, The Man Who Cures, Inc., 1000 University Street, Seattle, WA 98101.

The plus/minus virtue is that it strings together a number of clever solutions which appear just regularly enough and are sometimes, as the QCIC production parliamentary, well enough to merit recognition. Bertie Murch, Kevin McNaught, and Doug Hodge, each grab the stage when opportunity arises, and of the other principals, only Alan Edwards' unconvincing attempt at a Steel Damask vignette was acknowledged here as the plus/minus further and further into a dead ending land. The minus was associated with a qualified virtuousness, I thought the final curtain would never come.

As for the star of the piece, Paul Thong, I told him he is a very fine actor and I look forward to seeing him perform. Here are some of my thoughts on the character ("Mr. Neptune"). I cannot, however, be complacent about this. "That is a fact now, for which my command is passionately grateful." I am indistinguishable from those of the others we have loaned to our tape press. I sent the QTC a list of the guys I'd like to work with and I'm sure they chose this one.

I could go on but I think you've all had enough for now.

Set pieces strongest

THEY SHOOT HORSES, DON'T THEY?

By Jeremy Ridgman

*After Blood Money (1991), by Ray Harron, La Bête (1991, directed by Michael Radford) and The Piano (1993, directed by Jane Campion), Mike Hodges' latest venture, *They Shoot Horses, Don't They?* (1993, directed by David Bell, produced by Steve Bridges, written by Mike Hodges and Jennifer Caudle, music by Fred D'Onofrio, lyrics by Steve McEwan, starring Helen Hunt, Dennis Hopper, and Helen Hunt)*

"There's no prize for Lure's feet, what counts is staying on them," says Bloody Mary (Rocky G, your friendly MC) just before a grueling 100-hour dance marathon off in a descriptively jaunty start. We are in 1930s America, in the shadow of Hollywood, we are also, as with so many dances in neorealist costume, the bizarre spectacle of the matador functioning as a model for a society founded on competitive division and the lust of the quick, elusive buck.

La Borte's programmed idle-as-much-about-Melissa-McCoy, author of the original 1948 novel, has nothing about Ray Harron's *They Shoot Horses, Don't They?*

I assume after the making of the memorable film. There is little to recommend Harron's script. He finds a balance, awkwardly, between sex number and "backstage" chat and noodle, and between the present and the past to come. After the interval, the couple nearly crumble beneath the weight of a generation and indefinitely postpone involving the accidental shooting of the kindly supporter Mrs Lander and a contrived, if historically accurate resolution in which the matador is closed down by a morally conscious pressure group.

The central characters, Rocki and the man pair of dancers, are never developed. I am not sure why the matadorism building has been transferred, in production, to a peripheral couple, but it tends to accentuate the play's lack of emotional depth and, of course, weakens the impact of the characteristic social past. Fred O'Donnell gives a sustained and English performance, but is required to play a laconic and fairly straightforward Bloody, not the dynamic but more complex character of the film.

Comparison between play and film should perhaps not be too strongly emphasized, suffice it to say that as a play, *They Shoot Horses, Don't They?* is closer to a historical document than to the lyrical despair that is on the screen. David Bell's magnificently production-concious mont of the script's meanderings, turning it into an integrated



After Blood Money (1991), by Ray Harron, La Bête (1991, directed by Michael Radford) and The Piano (1993, directed by Jane Campion), Mike Hodges' latest venture, *They Shoot Horses, Don't They?* (1993, directed by David Bell, produced by Steve Bridges, written by Mike Hodges and Jennifer Caudle, music by Fred D'Onofrio, lyrics by Steve McEwan, starring Helen Hunt, Dennis Hopper, and Helen Hunt)

piece of total theatre. Mike Hodges' set, which transforms La Borte's cockpit into a nightmarish, complete-with-varnished floor floor, has both audience and hospital hooters blabbering in wonder as they enter together. A long introduction, during which spectators pass across the floor allows time to absorb some brilliantly selected details: the glimpse of a seedy washroom, a scrubbed white first-aid post in the wings, the American Dream clinically a nightmare.

In such a context, it is understandable that the strongest moments are the set

pieces, the songs, the dances, the writing etc. It is the sheer physical immediacy of the spectator which makes it so compelling. Here we are, the aging masses, we speculate, support, even adjudge, and if our attention focuses primarily on the sophisticated charm of the singer rather than on the singing, contestants, then perhaps there is a point being made.

The *They Shoot Horses, Don't They?* is a promising start to a challenging score under new artistic director Malcolm Blaiberg. La Borte looks set to stay on its last dance or otherwise.

THEATRE/SA



By Susan Vile/State Rep

Second half drops off

BAGGY GREEN SKIN

By Kevin Palmer. Directed by P. J. Walker. Music, Murray Lampert. Produced by State Theatre Company. Opened 11 October 1979.

Cast: Kevin Palmer (Hogger), Michael Roberts (Lighting, Angel Garage Manager), Michael Paine (Big Atom), Richard Anderson (Don Radio), Robin Bunting, Linda Duxbury, Helen Lyle, Murray Lampert (Michael Lampert), John Stenhouse, Peter Schenck, Tony Thomas (Production).

(Photograph: G. H. Morris)

"If God had wanted me to be in the army, he would have given me baggy green skin."

So speaks Fred Notts, infantryman at State Theatre Company's latest military offering. (This year has already seen *A House Of French Perfume* and *Off Hand* at Zeniths Bar, *Man's* Vietnam by local playwright and ex-national serviceman P. J. Walker. *Baggy Green Skin* deals with the invasion of a group of Australians in Vietnam, focusing in particular on one "Hogger".

Fred Notts is not quite your ordinary, everyday Dicksie. He doesn't smoke doesn't drink, shows no particular political leanings and displays an alarming naivety at times. He's not rather dull? So he is, in company but dullness is neatly covered as he opens the play. Alone on the stage, he soon disappears into his old iron truck, remembers and reflects, and all at once he is re-enacting the recruitment and training days of his army past. It is easy to relate to Warren Kerst's perceptive Fred as he steps in and out of the action, training, setting, commanding as he does and even setting up



372 *Baggy Green Skin*. Photo: David Hobson

"action/replay" sequences. Postures are made quickly and with a minimum of fuss stock figures disappear before they can lose their centre. The invasions, and moments of invasion, give an edge to the hallucinations. A play with something to say.

But the scene changes to Vietnam, and with it the style. The economy of theatrical short cuts gives way to the circumstantial detail of naturalism. Now stock figures remain too long to be funny. Once after Fred cannot hide his dullness, he runs the bar, rarely leaves the camp, and is not so speak directly to an agent until the end. The contact is gone. And although Robert Griffith and Tony Atsoprian provided some encouraging stabs at Sgt Major and private, although Kevin Thomas fished

out his monologue to a possible even more dismal further acting career, division could droop when the play had new scenes, a string of tenuously linked episodes with no real momentum forward. The ambivalence is underlined by the incongruity of the ending as Fred drops in the dark and tries out a frostbitten bar, then has been no build-up. His audience is empty. Nothing has been said.

Kevin Palmer's decision seemed to be affected by the play's structure, though competent throughout, it was less imaginative in the second part. Most successful was the set which made many innovations from sparse economy to naturalism and remained thoroughly functional.



David Harbord as Kasper in *Kasper* (1979). Photo: Alan Ross

Single attitude

PLAY STRINDBERG

By Susan Hill

After a successful run in Edinburgh, *Kasper* comes to Sydney's Opera House 1979. Director Brian Deegan. Stage Manager: Steven Foy. Lighting: Leigh Miller. Set: Michael Little. Help: David Harbord as Kasper. Photo: Alan Ross

From July to September last members of The Atage Company conducted a programme of community and educational activities in the Northern Territory. In October, *Atadidjana*, one of three productions mounted during their tour, *Strindberg's* *Play Strindberg*.

It's a beautifully written play. By reconstructing Strindberg's *Alvar* (1897) as a two-and-a-half-hour drama, Harbord has proved the differences of the original play are redundancy, as are in a spare economy, script which speaks directly to a modern audience.

Director Brian Deegan chose to stress the "game" image. Accordingly, his action moved like light-footed puppets, deliberate movements that danced, however, created and generated with all the precision of mechanical toys. It was a complete concept carried through into set work as well as movement. But in the end, I believe it was a mistake.

For once the style was established, that was it. What began as a polished display of

skilled movement ended as no more than a cold exercise in technique. The effect was to reduce still further the acting process that had already taken place in the adaptation so that one spoke less truth with the soul on the play. Even though Harbord's Kasper points up the comic side of the situation it exposes, and the agony beneath the laughter, it has become, indeed, absurd drama. His absurdity springs from a compulsion and the production by defining everything in terms of a single attitude allowed for no contrast to emerge. As a result, changes of mood were reversal and freezing was it seems an effort.

Given the intentions of the company, the action worked well. David Harbord's one-welder Edgar was married oak. In an occasional tendency to garble words, Elizabeth Lander, Alice, was a daring, prancing actress. Ron Radnor achieved a studied williness as Kari. All three became more interesting in the second half, though I think this was due, more to the閒ness of the later rounds than to any change in their approach. It was only a pity that they were not able to pass the tight initial levels.

Concentration and consistency

KASPAR

By Carl D. Frie. Director: Michael Harbord. Designer: Michael Harbord. Lighting: Michael Harbord. Stage Manager: Michael Harbord. Sound: Michael Harbord. Projections: Michael Harbord. Run Manager: Geoff Broad. David Harbord, Ben Harbord, Michael Harbord. 1979. 100.

Director: Keith Harbord. Designer: Michael Harbord. Lighting: Michael Harbord. Stage Manager: Michael Harbord. Sound: Michael Harbord. Projections: Michael Harbord. Run Manager: Geoff Broad. David Harbord, Ben Harbord, Michael Harbord. 1979. 100.

Tragedy, single a judgment, choice or decision to shift from home base at the Red Shed to home 82 for their production of *Peter Handke's* *Kasper*. They were able to exploit the spatial and lighting possibilities of this flexible room, while still retaining a sense of "rough theatre".

Kasper is a play to absorb and sum. It absorbs with its demonstration of one person's aspiring language, the triumphs, frustrations and absurdities in the learning process - and the communication seeking validation that in the most intelligent individual may be nothing more than a silent regardance of empty phrases. It seems as *Kasper* leaves the bewitching world of numbers things and attains the ordered secrets of verbal subtleties, only to end as a splintered emblem, evoking the primitive baseness of Othello's, "Touch and smoothe". A play of extraordinary power.

The central role is demanding for the most experienced actor. It requires vocal and physical demands, the ability to divorce the inflections from the verbal sense of words, to isolate, prevent the blurring of motivation of movement. Controlled exertions. David Karr was limited in both areas and consequently lost out on the subtleties of emotion that can swing this piece from solid joy to deepest despair. Nevertheless, it is a master of the play's greatness that, through sheer concentration and an unwavering consistency of approach, this young actor was able to control attention for the main part of the evening.

Concentration and consistency were indeed the strengths of the production as a whole. I enjoyed Keith Harbord's imaginative treatment of the prologue. *Kasper* sits in the tent here, this materialised into hours when isolated black-clad figures of costumed all purpose and decision as they walked and stampeded across the stage, punctuating *Kasper's* mood with song and aphorism and handling with care the techniques of the communications media - tape and cassette recorders, cameras, loud-hailer PA system, video camera and monitor. Again there were weaknesses in visual and aural control but this timed ensemble interplay made up for roughness in individual.

Set most sensibly against a blackness broken only by unlit, unlitening shafts of white, the play was allowed to emerge as Handke admires in his preface not as a story, but as a theatrical event.

THEATRE/VIC



My Insurance Premium/State Tax

Death at the Playbox makes a killing

THE HIPPER SHOW
THE SPALDING FAMILY
ALBUM

The figure also shows butterfly described by George Boulenger (1890) in Form *Forma chrysorrhoea* from French West Indies. Butterflies measured 40-45 mm. Forewing 25-27 mm. Hindwing 18-20 mm. Forewing 12-13 mm.

Alphonse W. Sharpe, Illinois Speaker of the House, Chicago
Frank Murphy, Michigan Governor, Lansing
John W. Davis, Franklin Roosevelt's Vice Presidential running mate
John D. Long, Head of the U.S. Navy
John E. Davis, Head of the U.S. Army
John T. Tamm, Franklin Roosevelt's attorney
John W. Davis, Illinois Senator

The *Washington Journal* affirms the Cuban Board declined the Bishop's request, accepted the Bishop's Circular and Police Judge. Presented by the Protestant Union, Cardinal, I presume, the Bishop's request is granted.

Just as the two previous Playboy stories shared the common theme of severity, the two newest stories share a preoccupation with death or more precisely, mortality, but without the morbidity and disillusionment of the former stories. *The Roger Stone* is Paul Hatherley, an expatriate Australian writer who appears to be *The Spreading Fungus*

When the Melbourne singer Cedric Raine sang at the *Hyperion* there was a great entertainment, and it has plenty of exuberance and competent dancing and singing and a repertory with pathos and social humour, but to call it a theatre is to do the place a disservice. It would have gone down just as happily before the patients at any of the many Gas Clinics. *Streets* is the theatre's repertory, that has mushroomed in every second order suburb. Certainly the music and the acting is a cut above the usual fare, but the script is often but as awful. In *Hyperion* contrast, The Spalding Forum's *Music* is a serious and engrossing piece of theatre which is carefully written and sympathetically produced. The singing at The Spalding Forum, although in the smaller experimental Upstairs space, is a vindication of Hoagland's policies at his best, whereas, the *Hyperion* demonstrates the worst side of Hoagland's artistic policies, namely that the Beaumont theatre would seem to lack a consistent policy.

The Alpine Skies has little in common with Haskins's traditional chapter forms, while his narrative has the volume and force, which are family traits for the creation of popular literature, but he makes all this little more than that, now also.

From a similar set of ingredients the ATP produced *The Pint French Miss* and a form of genuine popular theatre that is true to its roots and can communicate something that contemporary audiences can understand. The play contains a travelling theatrical family, the Sharps, who have various built-in sub-subplots. Sharps produce plays on Shakespeare, realising that there are not pulling audiences this, already in update their repertoire and parallel to the different tastes of their audiences, in writing their own versions of *Love's Labour's Lost*.

This format allows Fletcher to spend the first half of a scene and indulge and spoil at *Richard II* without it participating in *Henry VIII*. Similarly Gothic, portrayal of the Black Prince while in the second half he wallows in mirthless, often jokes about the English Nation. Fletcher does not even bother to take up the obvious opportunity the play offers to construct an audience tune. For unbridled mirthlessness to put forward the generation and national prophecies that Shakespeare or *Jack the Rhymer* do all the same.

Young Balfrat born playwright Colin Ryan had his first play produced at Melbourne University in 1871 and has written some ten plays, all of which have been produced by 'spontaneous' friends.

Although it has made recent work, it is a combination of two earlier plays, *Other and Another* by Wee which were staged at the Mantra last year and is the fruit of the recent and close collaboration with director Robert Wilson and the Ensemble. The title is a pun.



How Springer and Princeton Answer to "The Mystery Theory" of the *Principia Mathematica*

lymph per. However I found with *The Floating Dutch* (1945) that much of the dialogue and alternating but unrelenting competing focus upon either herself was obscured in the shadowy murk of the three characters. Whereas those scenes which show Dolley in the sharpest and most interesting light are those built around characters who are not part of the actually apocalyptic world of her female relatives.

The design is almost a parody of Coed Beethovens Arctic scene in *My Fair Lady* original when mischievous love and wrought iron professed to delicate matronly manners laced into blustering commanding drivelines lapped to over-large than deformed hearts in this rutting female world. It has dressed entrails in black velvet and lace, tucked her membranes and impaled them for a while on the end of her lethal gear-tripped tail piece in a final vinylized figure of unanticipated postures. Against a backdrop of

bring the badge for a shot. In between endless cups of tea they swing at drowsing lights above the chandelier, reading a continual book and pronouncing themselves in the mirror attached to the badge's swing.

All the five plays Matthew Kelly's *Playboy*, *Stevens* and *Dickens' Master Of The Salopian Astute* have the most fully realised plots, and they surpass the best short works by any of the previously mentioned writers from whose shadow they have recently emerged. And while the performances were in the main even, James Shamus as Big John in *The Laughing Astress* and Jack McElenan as Big Tom in *The House Of The Salopian Astute* represent one more of Shamus' fine provincial double contrast to Jack Hulbert's gloomy view that Australian theatre has not lapsed into Nihilistic decadence but is alive and kicking.

Academic absurdism

CLEAN SWEEP GROUND RULES

By Garry Hatchinson

4 plays by David Mamet and Tom Stoppard in *Ground Rules* (La Mama Theatre, Melbourne, Tel. 3199 0311, October 1984)

David Mamet's *Glengarry Glen Ross*, stage Manager, *Uncle Vanya*, *Death Trap*, Peter Hall's *Measure For Measure* (The Trojans, Australian Theatre, Grand Hall, Tel. 3199 0311, Melbourne, Tel. 3199 0311, Oct.

Cranks who venture into the rough and tumble of the real world of the theatre do so at their own peril as I can well attest. Higher critics who sit in the balconies, were all-saints who understand well the pain of sitting through yet another show, who discussed learnedly on the relative merits of actor and not director and sensitivity who might buy you a drink at the management, forget, who enjoyed earnestly other wise immature prospectus who contended in the struggle for higher standards greater education, greater art progressive policies, genuine humanity (and writing, higher standards, might be expected to love and cherish the nose spudger of a new experimental culture) the vineyard. They do not in stringgapping last stock efforts of obnoxious they stick in the kniv lead a foot, snarce, chop and gratuitously commit violence upon the works of their meanwhile mate, oblique, trend.

Yes, far from using the same standards



From La Mama Theatre's production of *4 Clean Sweeps*

that ordinary theatre workers up the rank have to accept, cranks who trespass are judged by some higher more ruthless method. Fellow carries head over backwards to great cost, presumably in the hope that it will be being given a hand, how it feels to take it. Though perhaps this sort of treatment is a punch sometimes who strays from the true path a coded message to tell them he one thing or the other. Perhaps a cranks' follow on knowing that a cranks' is a until he becomes something else that cranks ought not be pronouncements, that they should be serially interrogated, one activists or another.

This be way of preface to the theatre critic I secured Rattner's double bill at La Mama, *4 Clean Sweeps* and *Ground Rules*.

In normal circumstances I'm partial to an evening there. Small spaces, close-up acting and my audiences in general make for honest performances. Writers who do, for things beyond the limitations of "heat", acting and "heat" language do not deserve much.

Unsurprisingly the rather academic division of these plays is very hard to take, especially when they are set in an unromantic single period, narrative way and dawdled with few concessions to the imagination.

4 Clean Sweeps is the Beckett of *Measure For Measure* campy satirisation. Mr and Mrs Trostal outside their car musing on

life and death as seen in a newspaper about death by street-sweeper. The close of the play gives what the Trostals a clean sweep. I imagine that a funny plus can be made out of a Beckett pastiche the legend of *Measure For Measure*. The Man of the whole 1982 season before him is a bit too much to swallow these days. If we were *Measure* we may have *Measure* the lessons in that play are undigested in *4 Clean Sweeps*.

The second play, *Ground Rules* is something else. What it apparently intends to be is a metaphorical. Generic like account on the subject of "What are the rules between men and women, is Man inseparable for the very sake of himself by his complemented person of creating for his own life?" is search for "contaminable" etc.

The male character is equally bumbling. Mamet's man, the Woman keeps interrogating what are the rules? And so on and on. Something about all this I found intensely irritating. The thought at the heart of the play, the expectation that metaphor is a substitute for language that generalising is a way to escape the working out of the particular. Solidon has nothing sayied so so much, and for so little reward. By the time the thunder and lightning exploded from the direction of the stage manager I'd had enough. No more abdication, I cried. Give me the kitchen sink!

THEATRE/WA



State Rep. Jason Ambrona

Unworthy of the talent

THE LITTLE PONES

Digitized by srujanika@gmail.com

The York Award to Lillian Hellman. The National
Theatre Company. Playhouse Theatre. Opened 15
October 1939.

Terence Edgar Mervyn Dwyer. Long Drip
Night. Sadie Sabath. Ed. Marshall. Art. Arthur Gold.
Husband. Ernest Miller. Other Husband. Harry
Bentley. Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Lunt. Representations
Encore. Harry Williams. Marshall. Binnie. Wilton.
Stephens. Richard. Lester. Wright. Robert
Goddard. The Master. Roscoe. G. Nichols. Alan. J. Smith.
(Professional).

It is probably not a good idea to review Lillian Hellman's play. She has an established position in the American theater drama, with a couple of Drama Critics Awards to prove it. And you, her express of American ideals, be they powdered with the whitewashing of Indian scalpel-scarifiers or the dehumanizing greed of the American businessman, come over in pedestal-crowns with varying degrees of verbiage between the glibbing episodes of melodrama.

The *Little Foxes* really ought to be moving theatre. The central situation is full of many conflicts, and a nice balance of villains and victim figures almost ensure that our sympathies are fully engaged. Except that the characters are cardboard. Strong cardboard, but still cardboard. The Hildash family of go-getters, who married for money, who cheat each other over money, who intend to use their children to waste their money, are the archetypes of today's television mini-series.

For human interest there is tragic Anne Biedle who carries gentle soothsayer dreams in her head – remnants of a happy childhood – but who has to resort to drink to cope with the horror of an impossible marriage. The doctor's husband at the funeral, Hoffmeyer, has a heart-condition, which just prevents him from participating in the cultism. It may take considerable self-control to play the big scene, dying of a heart-attack, unable to reach the medicine, while his stone-headed wife looks onward lets him croak. All reminders of Bette Davis in the film version – and if they got systematic, at least it could be cut from the film.

• You can't get away with the words

For example, to combine glamour with pathos, make used be a controlled chilling laugh.

The men have no work except under their characters being non-motif, and could be two-dimensional at that! Alan Cassell as the good guy Harvey Goldblatt manages the avoidable scenes well, avoiding the like abstractions; those could have still seemed fugitive in the shadows come when he almost loses the claim at first and gains. Dennis Schube makes a regrettable brief appearance as William Marshell, the countenance outsider, whose bittersweet offer sets off the cross that concentrates the action of the play.

James Heaton and Leslie Wright 23



Read and answer the following questions:

lively saga that remained in poet goals and regrets. So good Miller and Tennessee Williams because of the mystery and poetry that infused into their plays. But it would be harder to let Hoffman remain unperforated legend writing auto-biographies.

Edgar Mitchell's production aspects as much energy as his writing. There's a lush magnificence w/ Tom Tropic combining the Southern gothic style with sheer visual pleasure. There are a number of excellent performances notably Jenny McHale as the charming and tragic Aunt Hattie, and Elizabeth Barr as the ruthless Beulah Giddens. The set and looks superb (in some very weird clothes).

Oscar and Benjamin brothers and rivals have some good scenes of alternating bumptious and cut-throat competition though neither of them managed to outwit the playwright by creating a rounded character.

Lucy Moore, a newcomer to the Playhouse, played Allergenia the vulnerable daughter, with quiet intensity and it will be interesting to see what she does with a more complex part.

Presumably this is the kind of drama that originally gave "the self-made play" a bad name, and although interesting as a piece of theatre-history it hardly seems worthy of all the attention lavished on it in the production.

Some brilliant conceptions

ST MARY'S CONFERENCE

By Colin O'Brien

St. Mary's Conference by Robert David McDonald
1990, 100 mins. \$11.95 R & A (Supervision 12) Director: RPTF
Writer: Leslie Hartley. Original: Richard Hartley
Lighting: Roger Sibbald
Producers: Catherine Wilkins, Christopher Randa
Cinematographer: Robert Hartley
(Photographer)

"Between the beginning and the end", as a U.S. Army paroled spy, research remarked "Tells the middle," and I'm afraid it's a bit that was with *St. Mary's Conference*, a good theatrical notion well at times brilliant, yet the plot itself suffers from a degree of showboating.

The central action is a meeting in 1941 between Hitler's mistress Eva Braun and Mussolini's Clara Petacci at Eva's Berlin flat while their countries are in conference. The only other character is the young SS officer who guards Eva.

It's played with unaffected ease by an

actress now in Perth, Catherine Wilkins, plus forbidden American pop records and otherwise breaks the Hitler's rules but vital German weaknesses in smoking and drinking. Clara comments and/or on the necessity for her being kept at night since as Mussolini has to keep up the pretence of being a good husband. The women dismiss their wives' roles at the same time revealingly, at their own expense, the corrupt frequency at the core of the most dictatorial supposed ideal and unwilling societies. By degrees the women adopt the piety and respect of their respective leaders, orgiastic and boasting at each other. The first act ends in an ironic and harrowing tableau the girls in an overtly sexual embrace accompanied by Wagner's "Ride of the Valkyries" (not played loud enough for my taste). Then drama, the SS guard into their game by turns seducing and bullying her and finally drawing from her a confession of Jewishness. I felt he had a long monologue on the repression of minorities, brilliantly handled by Arnold Hitchcock. Some people have remarked that she found the monologue rather stilted and turned into the play, but apart from being slightly introduced, I did not find it out of key with the dramatic content and the play set up.

Wendy Danvers's playing of Clara

Petacci is a fine and performance. At times it was a little uneven in that I felt she might dip into the line into a paroxysm of an Hitler act, but it is clear an reflection that a degree of self-parody on the part of Clara is deliberate, both feared and avoided, something in such a situation might well play up the role.

The play was written by Glasgow Citizen Theatre playwright Robert David McDonald, who also wrote *Chekhov*, which for me many like wise suffered from self-indulgence and loss of shape. Here the writing sometimes appeared pretentious, not arising from the situation and the direction of the play founders. This was not helped by a lack of clear direction on Colin McColl's part. I felt for certain that the transition into their lover's roles by the women would be more effective more passion charged. There were also irritating manner of detail. I thought Richard Hartley's rather Hartleian set a wrong conception. As Colin Hartley asserts in his excellent anthology of bad taste *Knock the Head Back* was fitted to the 1941 good taste being a sign of decadent Jewish civilization. But reservations aside this was a good evening in the theatre, some brilliant conceptions and characters exquisitely portrayed in all three acts.



Catherine Wilkins (left) and Wendy Danvers (right) in *St. Mary's Conference* at the Whitefriars Theatre, Canterbury

INTERVIEW

Richard III and two comedies

By Irving Wardle

One of my favorite Elizabethan paintings of a dark deserted landscape that turns out on closer inspection to be a portrait of Lawrence Olivier in the robes of Richard III is a pair of graphic reminders that completely sums up the bold Olivier has exercised over the role for the past thirty odd years. No other British leading actor has dared risk the comparison, and the play has been successfully revived only in the context of the RSC's *Hours of the Hours* cycle, which in part the problem by scaling Richard down from a mighty character to a mere agent of divine retribution.

The challenge has now been met head-on in Christopher Monks' National Theatre production which aims to release the tragedy from these compressing membranes and restore it to the repertory. To restore Richard as a great acting part of course, means having a great actor to play him and there would have been no NT show but for the presence of John Wood, an actor whose speed, wit, magnetism, and sheer devilry give him an unrivaled claim to the role. And as it turns out, this is Mr Wood's show to an almost lavish degree.

No actor ever equal is the designer, Ralph Koltai who has converted the Olivier Theatre's open stage into a Plantagenet abbey, with two massive leaden walls that slide and rotate with a thunderous rumble and a raked metal floor impregnated with blood games for all the on-stage beheadings.

In other set that supplies the first glimpse of Richard, whose shadowed shadow is projected on one of the walls as he holds his own view for the opening soliloquy, Irving Wardle qualifies I counted perhaps the most important of all his bottom line: "I'm the one who's got the ability to show you all his tricks and will be used by surprise. But for instance can you forget that this man is an actor and of course the same parallel the character of Richard who privately outlines his plan to the audience and then

carries them out with amazing speed."

One great temptation of the part from which even Oliver accentuates is to engage the audience's sympathy in the first half of the play only to lose it once Richard gains the crown and changes from a witty schemer to a straightforward butcher. Wood is at pains to avoid this. He evades the public and makes them laugh but he evades them. But he never tries to make friends. He is a criminal throughout an amazing mixture of high and lowly, a terrible monster with the result that the performance steadily gains in power instead of losing impetus at half time.

The wooing of Lady Anne offers one typical dramatic lesson from tradition. The scene usually hangs on the simple contrast of a murderer playing the perfect gallant to a woman whose brother he has just slaughtered. Wood gets on the perfect gallant but uses the corpse to undress him as abominably, slips a finger in the wounds and licks the blood off. The effect if you can believe it is extremely funny, especially when he immediately swings to the opposite extreme and so refreshes tucks the corpse up again holding the sheet in near hospital perversity.

Everything he does is pushed to the limit, partly with political self-sabotage, and often he seems to go past the point of no return and on the risk of his life pulls the character back on course. Add to that his capacity for instantaneous reversals as when he savagely beats a messenger to the ground and then apologetically brushes the dust off him and you have some idea of the electricity Wood generates on stage.

However, Oliver remains unreplicated for the simple reason that Richard is a terrible character who needs to be surrounded by strong personalities. "Love this world for me to handle it," he says but all he gets on the NT is a shadow world of interchanging looks suggesting him in conventional groupings and offering him no assistance whatever. It is a great performance, but it takes place in a vacuum even though that is what he deserved.

Antagonistic drama made use of its rare West End appearance with the October opening of *Middle Age Spouse* (Lyric) Roger Halls incisional comedy on the man and women of the working

gentleman. As Mr Hall will need no introduction to Australian readers, a worth summary for me is to say that the play survival is a progressive Odysseus-like policy translated into Fletcherian and the danger of running into the Richard III Show with marked success and that even after the inexcusable comparisons with Aukhouse and Peter Sallis, the reviewing fraternity were left with a healthy respect for Mr Hall as a comic writer who does not feel obliged to keep one-fifth of his career off stage. Such authors being in short supply over here there should be an eager market for the next Hall assignment.

Of international comedy Anne Valentine's *For Persons over Persons* (Cottesloe) takes a peculiar look at a group of Arts recruits going through hell, training in the last year of the war. What sets the piece apart from others on this well-worn theme is the use of Miss Valentine's records of AT's girls, first seen lined up before a Memphis piano-dropping sergeant shaped like a tea-chest and waiting under her threat to "turn you flowers of British civilization into an efficient war machine." Closed female institutions hold an irresistible fascination for British operators and it is with the shabby, conniving of Jack Pinty a production that one wonders the soon-to-graduate school girl the Edgware underclass and their droll, comical comparisons being held in shape.

The action features a ferocious fist-fight Indian heart-break, and a vicious move by the Edgware belle to work her ticket by getting pregnant under the terms of Paragraph 11. Reputable bloomers become large in the show, including one pair that get dissolved in a bucket of hush. And the flavor of 1944 comes drifting back in barnack room-therapies of 111 "Is querying you in all the old familiar places." Of course they all wind up good matrimony secrets exchanged, close-burners dissolved, but then, to a good deal of ban on the way to the inevitable destination and the girls are as red as your roses.

By *Richard III* production
Theatr espagnol 10/10/81 Directed by
Christopher Monks
Left to right: Mr Wood (as Richard III)
John Wood (as his double IV)

FASHIONAL



CHILDREN'S THEATRE **TOM UGLY IN FLIGHT**

Dr. Gauri T. M.

ON 1 Oct 1958 RDRM 5000 5100
should just work with 100000 but this
is never true for 100000 cannot
possibly be the ideal of using the best of
the integrators. There are the smooth areas
through using with the young people
and then the smooth areas as a parallel
area of smooth and short rewards
utilizing of the short suggestion often
coupled on these through the understanding
of the human, nor are they open the
concerned adults. They have proceeding
medium and have to place challenging
task we try to understand that other
groups hoping that part of it is to be
smooth open. In fact the problem of being
another young people, and said that most
of the problems behind the young in mind
are the subjects of concern for the educational
development.

Mr. and Mrs. King and a group of
other people at the Johnson Road
Gathering, and at the Murrerichill
Meeting. There was a great deal
done, all kinds of help needed
was given, and many were got in and out
of trouble. This great movement we
had been planning is there.

On the other hand, it is clear that the *Wet and Dry* *Wetlands* and *Wet* *Wetlands* were in a state of change and perhaps had a short, but rather brief, life. *Wet* *Wetlands* and *Wet* *Wetlands* are the only two *Wetlands* types that show a steady decline in area over time. The *Wet* *Wetlands* decrease is rather small, but the *Wet* *Wetlands* decrease is quite large. Between 1980 and 1990, the *Wet* *Wetlands* decreased by 10.5% and the *Wet* *Wetlands* decreased by 11.5%. Between 1990 and 1995, the *Wet* *Wetlands* decreased by 10.5% and the *Wet* *Wetlands* decreased by 11.5%. Between 1995 and 2000, the *Wet* *Wetlands* decreased by 10.5% and the *Wet* *Wetlands* decreased by 11.5%. Between 2000 and 2005, the *Wet* *Wetlands* decreased by 10.5% and the *Wet* *Wetlands* decreased by 11.5%. Between 2005 and 2010, the *Wet* *Wetlands* decreased by 10.5% and the *Wet* *Wetlands* decreased by 11.5%. Between 2010 and 2015, the *Wet* *Wetlands* decreased by 10.5% and the *Wet* *Wetlands* decreased by 11.5%. Between 2015 and 2020, the *Wet* *Wetlands* decreased by 10.5% and the *Wet* *Wetlands* decreased by 11.5%. Between 2020 and 2025, the *Wet* *Wetlands* decreased by 10.5% and the *Wet* *Wetlands* decreased by 11.5%. Between 2025 and 2030, the *Wet* *Wetlands* decreased by 10.5% and the *Wet* *Wetlands* decreased by 11.5%. Between 2030 and 2035, the *Wet* *Wetlands* decreased by 10.5% and the *Wet* *Wetlands* decreased by 11.5%. Between 2035 and 2040, the *Wet* *Wetlands* decreased by 10.5% and the *Wet* *Wetlands* decreased by 11.5%. Between 2040 and 2045, the *Wet* *Wetlands* decreased by 10.5% and the *Wet* *Wetlands* decreased by 11.5%. Between 2045 and 2050, the *Wet* *Wetlands* decreased by 10.5% and the *Wet* *Wetlands* decreased by 11.5%. Between 2050 and 2055, the *Wet* *Wetlands* decreased by 10.5% and the *Wet* *Wetlands* decreased by 11.5%. Between 2055 and 2060, the *Wet* *Wetlands* decreased by 10.5% and the *Wet* *Wetlands* decreased by 11.5%. Between 2060 and 2065, the *Wet* *Wetlands* decreased by 10.5% and the *Wet* *Wetlands* decreased by 11.5%. Between 2065 and 2070, the *Wet* *Wetlands* decreased by 10.5% and the *Wet* *Wetlands* decreased by 11.5%. Between 2070 and 2075, the *Wet* *Wetlands* decreased by 10.5% and the *Wet* *Wetlands* decreased by 11.5%. Between 2075 and 2080, the *Wet* *Wetlands* decreased by 10.5% and the *Wet* *Wetlands* decreased by 11.5%. Between 2080 and 2085, the *Wet* *Wetlands* decreased by 10.5% and the *Wet* *Wetlands* decreased by 11.5%. Between 2085 and 2090, the *Wet* *Wetlands* decreased by 10.5% and the *Wet* *Wetlands* decreased by 11.5%. Between 2090 and 2095, the *Wet* *Wetlands* decreased by 10.5% and the *Wet* *Wetlands* decreased by 11.5%. Between 2095 and 20100, the *Wet* *Wetlands* decreased by 10.5% and the *Wet* *Wetlands* decreased by 11.5%.

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Another well-known example of this phenomenon is the case of the *Levi-Civita* tensor, which is a tensor of rank four, but which is not a tensor of rank one.

The *Adolescent Read Adjustment Center* continues to develop a programme that would benefit the other child protection centres, in particular, providing them with the knowledge and skills to make such a centre at the *Adolescent Read Adjustment Center* an all group business with each group being a vehicle through which a different activity takes place, and through this a challenging group, an after-school programme, is created but a built-in purpose for the disadvantaged people, and with the plan to do so, make attempt to engage the spirit of the particular community and with a view to take with them a challenging dimension of problem.

part of the last page, and the
rest as does the play and the portion
alongside of the other actors and
accesses. But this they are using now is a
propaganda that it is all play about
them. Their languages change and the
names of their lives. It will affect them
in the spirit of theatre giving them the
confidence to embark on the most difficult
missions.

For these reasons, though the potential in patients and HCs did not differ well enough to distinguish the groups, the range of different levels of resilience in the patients and their targets from all that we assess can also

The 6th rule, ROM 1:16-17, has caused me trouble with the kind of personal, do-it-yourself, emotionally manipulative, boundary-pushing that manipulates people and human characters rather than the divine God.

surge. Addison Road gang will have been harassed and when that chapter plays its last game from 1910 to 1911, and the last and final game of the local circuit, the 1911-12 season, the young people will have their fun.

The idea of having professionals assess and address clients' strengths and performing plays with visiting people started to begin during this process. We began to think of what we called "the Play" as a means to change the strengths of people living in assisted living facilities. The professionals involved in the Play were untrained, amateur actors who had no experience with old people.

In developed areas, however, a marked
thus, but a wider range than the *honey-*

1. *Community police are given, and in that their function is to police the streets, to maintain the property of the community, to care for the health of their members, their patients, control "hooligan" degenerates, police, and maintain law and order, along with protection and care of the public of the community.* This is the basic idea. But, the community police are not to be

Other members of the party, however, were not so sanguine. They believed that the movement was destined to fail, and that the party would be disbanded. This was a strong view among members of the party, particularly among those who had been born into the party, and had been brought up in its traditions. And while many of the party members were sympathetic to the movement, they were not fully committed to it. And while many of the party members were sympathetic to the movement, they were not fully committed to it.

I like all the qualities of a real, polished, and exciting education. I had special fun getting as high and strong as possible, hopping around the playground, and then running around, shouting, and laughing, with a real, wild, crazy, and happy enthusiasm.

244 of the 2500 species that provide nectar for birds, the birds are not able to eat all of the nectar available. This is because many species are not able to digest some parts of nectar. For example, a honeybee can't eat the nectar of a flowering plant because the nectar is too thick. This is because the plant has added a lot of sugar to the nectar to attract bees to it.

From every such a country, it is the
spirit of luxury, of luxury, of luxury,
possible in the home of us all, but for
young people there are a deadly fact and
another fact.



DANCE



By William Shorebridge

Dance Umbrella — needs more experimentation

Choreographers, go-togethers like the Seymour Centre Dance Umbrella or the

Australian Dance Festival for which more than twice as many entries

Many for the organisers faced with the task of bringing all the performing groups together and shuffling them into some sort of order, stress for the performers who have so little time to prepare and especially money for the audience watching them or the critic trying to evaluate them on their merits.

For the audience is not so much the difficulty of shifting perspectives, but, balloonists to adapt at that has rather coping with the wrenching gear changes, emotional and dramatic, that are necessitated when they have to sit through up to four hours in one night some of them so tattered and beat that one hardly has a chance to "read" them.

For a critic the main difficulty arises from selecting the experience necessary to analyse each work, performer, company. It doesn't do to use the same scalpel on the Aboriginal Islanders Dance Theatre as one does for say the Australian Contemporary Dance Company, the same intentions and training are worlds apart.

To be exhaustive on the subject would take scores of newspaper, so in the space

available, all one can do is relate certain aspects, certain subtleties that floated throughout the season and now there, hoping to reveal the strengths and weaknesses in each attempt.

THEME NO. 2: DANCE WITH A SOCIAL CONSCIENCE

With this type comes much talk of "commitment" and "experimentation", two subjects always present in the "perennial arena of the avant-garde" to use Ariane Croce's happy phrase. The stage is grand, but when our current situation is the realisation! Where is the analysis of dance the who, how and wherefore? "Speaks the social conscience, where does mere suggestion and bad incorporation begin?" "Conscious" practitioners are afloat at going on about "Soul" and "Feeling". But what is being left here and who is doing the leaving? Any way so many of them have so little dance technique that it is impossible to tell if they have any feeling. Thus red again this dance style returns, dance to an incidental position, the body as metaphor disappears and the flesh as decoration takes its place.

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These pointers by and large retreat from the howling expanse of dance possibilities now open in this country, and hidden inside a cosy quadrant of narrative, sugar-subsidized abstraction, or the hollow paraphernalia of "realism". As far as the Native Embodiment is concerned, the works that still make this genre are Bushbabies' Captain Jack (Giselle Chevrel), Gino Adams' and Andrew May's Northern Hills Modern Dance Ensemble's *Our Land* (Suzanne Maryam Baat's Arrowsmith and Bushbabies, and the Aboriginal Dancers' *Aboriginal Dancers* by Carole Johnson).

None of the above works, however than others, seem succeed in communicating their intention, and others fail dramatically. For a start, Chevrel's Captain Jack is extraction, six minutes of hollow, inclusions set to the Billy Joel song that suits it all.

Norman Hall's *Glim Adventures*, saying far less than the programme note rings crystal and hollow at this late stage. There is a theme of "realism" and sure enough there are three roles on stage going through an isolation school. But there is nothing to it to perceive or experience really, no life beyond the contours of the stage and nothing to even hint at halfway to metaphor. There are no "social issues" in dance, only personal issues and that difference kills off Hall's piece while inventing the Aboriginal Islanders' *Aboriginal Dance* with palpable life, emotion and force.

The embassy in question is the one built by Aboriginal representatives last year at the Parliament House, located in Canberra, but the through-going letter to the whole spectrum of land rights and cultural generate. The work is a long, sprawling piece, raw with immediate demand and proposed change. When much as the Prologue is an example of tribal dances from Murrungun Island done straight but in the context of the whole work they stand as symbols of the symbiotic relationship between man and nature that existed before Whitey showed his face.

Indeed, throughout the dances, Whitey never really shows his face as such, all we see is the effect created by his passing, the drunkenness, warring families, children taken from their mothers and forcibly integrated. A symbiotic relationship being at the middle of the work encapsulates the discourse. The "Church" suffers all after having given scant consolation to a bereaved woman, an abandoned Black girl, twists and turns across the stage as the "Wallaby Prayer" ironically priors the story of a blackfella having found God and having "mates" with her.

Here is where the influences of "modern



Carole Johnson, choreographed by Carole Johnson, Aboriginal Dancers Dance Company

dancer" walk onto the stage and pre-empt the tribal style. The stamping rhythms disappear and "yearning" bodies take over, suppling arms, arching bodies and slow collapse. What the audience responds to here is not just the content (the dancer) or the material (the energy that drives the content) but the dancer that activates the material.

We can see clearly the symbols, behind the visual and it's that double whammy that gives both the solo and the work as a whole its patina. I say most of the work, because the finale with its banners and "What do we want? Land Rights? When do we want them? Now!" bursts the compassions and directions of what has gone before. The editor of *Heartsick* need fall down into the shrill common-places of agi-prop.

The choreographer of the piece Carole Johnson is an entrepreneur of the tele-

visionary Dance Group of New York that strives to be more-continent-than-the-continenters-based band of American dancer artists. I suspect Miss Johnson is trying their same mode of operation but here We'll see how it goes, but I have a feeling that tends instead of expression. Work work just as Ponson and his pals have demanded in America.

I also have a feeling that the *Heartsick* *Aboriginal Dance* is more a collective attempt than a solo creation, and I hope it is. Miss Johnson has achieved a plangent success in conferring a real piece of dance theatre that will last as long as the people behind it last.

In closing, the Aboriginal Arts Board sees the Aboriginal Islanders Dance Ensemble as more a rehabilitation programme than a growing performance group. The Board is seen as more determined to protecting past cultural



TOP LEFT: *Boomerang* (photographed by Carolyn Johnson - Aboriginal Dancers, Dancer's Company)

ambitions. It believes that to ask just what they really want, this and pretty front an established or dead culture as a forum wherein aspects of that culture can grow and develop, not least to become a part of our cultural bloodstream but rather for us to be the raw material in regenerating it. Such the performing arts are best suited to doing that.

THEME NO. 2: DANCE AS JOY AND FUN FOR LIFE OR IN PANACEA FOR LIVES!

Why is it that when dancers want to be joyful they immediately fall into peacock postures, and when the dance looks benign as if it were photographed in the sand box? Has the idea of dance "kids" got to them? They seek an expression of unadulterated exuberance, but all this cartooning

cartwheeling and prancing about is in effect saying, "Don't you just love us and our life, wholesome healthy bodies?" Well no actually, because we have about as much impact as gnats on the wing. This I think may be because so many of these performers need get a chance to perform their creation in the studio surrounded by mirrors, and thereby forget the all important dialectic between the stage and the audience.

There are two types of joy dances most predominant. The first is the Joy and Fun Dance, under whose wings comes our ballet tag along dancing and booting. The first dance is practised in the Dancescenes and the '70s movies or evident in works like Martha Graham's *Phlegm* or *Acrobats* or Doris Humphrey's *De Whiplash*. It is practically non-existent in

Australia which is hardly surprising given the spiritual desolation of the place.

The second is exuberance and rhythmic movement pervades that series of practically every turn. Leagues Clubs, musical comedies and the dizzied Dance. What the poor half-starved audience desires of this sort of dancing is the element of surprise. If mass浩瀚舞團 it must have outlandishness and it must be kept amazed.

The Dancer Umbrella pieces did not achieve this. *Boomerang* (photographed by Carolyn Johnson - Aboriginal Dancers, Dancer's Company) and *Fun and Laughter* (Norman Hall - Canberra Dance Ensemble) for *Stephanie Burridge's Seven Dance Theatre's* *Blues* (Ruth Gadsden and a fast selection of the bushels and broken brought out to Emba Dance Theatre were all representative of the soggy results

rehearsal in Mrs. Barr's "just for fun" thinking.

Cathleen Barr's *Firefly's Ark* in particular had me grinning my mouth. It was set to Bush Aboriginal Culture No. 3 and that immediately put me on my guard. It was everything I expected in the within, moral and so dependent on the strong rhythmic memory of the music that it had no life of its own. A waste of promising dancers. Ross Coleman's *Reel '77* was a small batch of dead jump-stage-angle. It was only danced by David Palmer, but just what was he dancing?

If one can't get surprise, one could at least expect parody, as presented by the Trots or Jeanne Hobson's *The Convict*, but these poor performers didn't have the expertise to be adequately parodic.

If that was either incidental parody, it was self parody and quite unconvincing.

THEME NO. 3: DANCE AS A BIFFER
THAT PASSES BY
THAT PASSETH ALL UNDER-
STANDING

All of dance is easier if visual. The great pas de deux of classical ballet are rated. Modern dance drug precipitately seriously, are concerned that repetitive contractions constitute visual. The Aboriginal Indians' dancing those Mornington Island hunting scenes demonstrated that you don't have to be barefoot and rhythmic to be realistic but the other side effect is hyperbolic twists so fluid for visibility insurance.

A quantum example of such cubistic thinking would have to be the Cathleen Barr's *Firefly's Ark*. This is a collection of immobile figures draped in bed sheets standing around a solo dancer who shivers, winches and generates in catalogue intrusiveness. The "trots" is a such rush of his arms, hands and sheets from these immobile figures. No one knows what the irregular percussive moves and nothing is going to tell them idea of all the choreography because there is no running reference or narrative linked in it. all we have is a situation.

Margaret Lassell's Bush Ball was once successful. I grasp this piece under the initial heading because although it was pure dance without any overt narrative intention, the placing and conceptual associations of the two dancers Sarah Hall and Sylvia Smith gave it the range of Portuguese cultural domination game.

Lassell's argument in this piece is of turning the complexities of spatial deployment, speed, texture, colour and shape into iconographic images and just like us, the clients of the stage had the need into an awareness of the atmosphere behind it. This is what most dances, visual or otherwise should do: the composition of choreography and the attack of the performers are the significant

towards comprehension. They are suggestions so strongly created that however he or she chooses for the viewer, no matter how individual his interpretation may be.

Margaret Barr's *Outfoxes* was essentially that between a male and female body, but due to the sexual interpretation of the performers all I could "hear" were the music and power of complimenting muscles and joints.

The sexual ritual of Lloyd Neeson's *Macau* set to some music from Australia a high minded substantiate Apache may, it was everyone but unconvincing.

Trying to stop something is visual too I guess and Agnes Garrick's *Reel* was finally stretching especially with the sound track of nonsense and revolutionary speech about the withdraws placed in trying to give up the label. It was enjoyable because it was unpredictable but I wonder if it would be just as good without that backing.

THEME NO. 4: DANCE AS ITSELF OR WHATEVER

The intangible field is the favour of those people who don't really know what they want to say or why they choreograph. As most dance is visual all dance is essentially about itself, just like music. Balanchine has proved that, but most Australian audiences haven't yet travelled into the fact and it will take a little practice to make them in. The SMC and the AAT are two such little gods but they are not the theme of this article.

When the press are to make something in regards movement rarely looks anything in the dance design or the formulation of the dancers that makes that choreographic gripболтнн visible. The shifting kinks remain shifting limbs and never become signs.

Into this last category falls Stephen Blundell's *Craving the Sun* and Jo Price's *Norman Mailer's Firebird*. Virginia Davis' *Carpe Diem*, Kari Ian Clark, Paul Hosier, Ruth Galyean, Franklin Lander's *Obstruction* and Christine Parsons' *Lord*.

I wish I could really say something about them but there is nothing to say apart from the fact that they were all suggestive of a choreographer's need edging over never crossing over line.

The whole Dance Unsettled is a laudable idea but there has got to be more and experimentation done to make it all workable. I can appreciate the cramped quarters, the bulk of men, and the limited ability of the dancers available, what I can't understand is the sort of idea. Whatever these myriad dance people are "into" they're not "into" it very far.

There are exceptions to everything and some of them are presented around worth keeping. As for the rest however Hume-Harmon couldn't force me back to look on them again.

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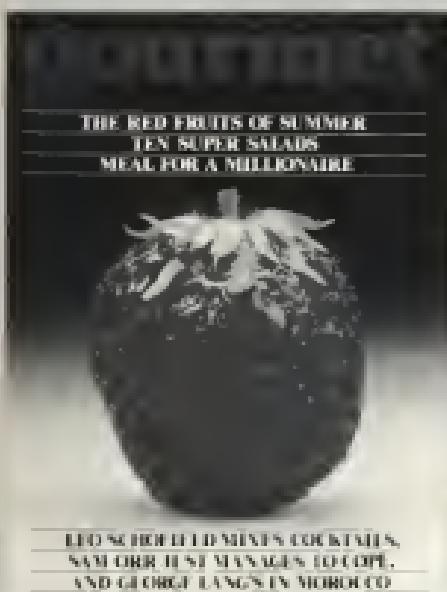
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OPERA



By David Giger

The future of opera

The off-stage turmoil which so dominated Australia's opera scene for most of 1979 seems set to be a major feature of the 1980s as well. The departure of Peter Hemmings as general manager of the national company after only a year in office and the fact he was replaced late in October by an interim general manager (and Sydney salaried Kenneth Trulock) condemned the Australian Opera to a further period of administration uncertainty which must produce at least some undesirable side-effects in the artistic area, for performers can never do their best when they are preoccupied by backstage gripes and uncertainties.

Another opera development last in the year will no doubt prove to be at least as important in the long term as the unfortunate backstage misadventures at the Australian Opera was the announcement on October 19 that the Australian Council had decided to hold an inquiry into the opera and music theatre scene with a view to reviewing subsidy policy in national terms.

Though there have been official protestations that the inquiry is not related to the Hemmings-Borlange conflict at the AO, it is hard to take them very seriously. Clearly any account of the opera scene in this country which ignored the place in that scene of the company which puts on more performances and receives more subsidy money than all the other performing groups combined would be worse than useless.

Equally clearly, differences of opinion on matters of repertoire, casting and

ticketing policy - the vital stuff on which the future of any national opera company fundamentally depends - were at the heart of the Hemmings-Borlange-AO board tensions. Nothing has been resolved by the departure of Hemmings except that the Hemmings view on such matters, which alarmingly seems to have the undisputed majority of the powers which control the AO board, is now opposition-free within the national company.

And very few opera-lovers can feel much as repose in the prospect of an AO so completely under the thumb of a man who has to put it really - not demonstrated to date that he has the vision required to lead that thumb in the best interests of the development of the arts in this country.

Even in Sydney these days, even in the substrata of the AO itself, there are deepings in the way things are going in the national company. Yet there is also a kind of paroxysm syndrome, a feeling that what has happened must be had to happen even if we ordinary mortals might quite say who, coupled with a strong feeling of complacency engendered by the past few years of operatic plenty when the Sydney Opera House has been the unchallenged focal point of the performing arts on the country as well as an international arts tourist mecca, when all the goodies have dropped into the lap of Sydney opera houses.

SHODDY TREATMENT

In the other major cities, and particularly in Melbourne, anger and determination are more the order of the day, anger at what legal opposition feels should amount to the AO, and determination to do something about it. In Brisbane and Adelaide, opera-lovers in general and the State companies in particular are annoyed - not so much by the heavy of the AO seasons in their cities each year, which they concede perhaps is inevitable, as at the choice of repertoire which all too often conflicts directly with what the local company can do and would like to do. Surely the argument runs, a company which can mount 16 operas in Sydney in a year and a few less in Melbourne ought to be able to choose a touring repertoire that avoids conflict with the work of locally based companies whose repertoires must be determined within far more restricted resource parameters, both human and financial.

In the off-the-binch halcyon days at the start of the Hemmings era, they can have outside Sydney as a big and powerful

trend really determined to help them directly and indirectly - through the joint seasons involving the AO and a State company through loan of human and material resources, through co-operative planning of repertoire. Nowhere there are a good deal more complex reasons, indeed, why the joint seasons are in doubt for future years. It has already been announced that there will not be one in Queensland in 1980, but it is impossible to imagine anyone of the Hemmings-Borlange crew issue of the significant ones.

FRANGELISTIC REPERTORY

In one extraordinary respect, of course, both Borlange and Hemmings are 'wore

on the same side of the repertory fence in the short run: operatic rock. The Merri Hadon in particular has a legitimate place in the repertory of a grand opera company.

We doubt they are in least momentarily right in the context of the whole of the operatic world. Having such remote operas as own. And even here with works no doubt have their place, only as



Anna Maria in *The Merry Widow*. Photo: Helen Morris

part of what must be a continuing evangelistic enthusiasm on the part of opera management to expand the parameters of repertory but the whole operation stagnate, atrophy and die. The trouble is that since Borlange became general director of the Australian Opera the only excursions off the beaten track taken by the company have been up highways he wishes to explore, or perhaps places he will wish to sing.

There are even some opera-lovers rude enough to point out that the Australian operators of Borlange and Sutherland, be it operatic or bel canto operatic, provide

unprecedented dues to the projected events performing and recorded Sutherland/Boncristiano repertory of the following year or so (not necessarily, as in the case of *Luisa Miller* and *Die Meistersinger*, without more than token involvement of the local supporting forces). In a word, they ask, that Australian Opera's ambitions should be force-led, and that, in effect, the ADG's only accusations off the beaten track should be at the whim of Boncristiano.

TOO MUCH IS THEREAL?

There is no doubt at all that Joan Sutherland as the *Merry Widow* has indeed has office appears a good deal wider than office appears that Joan Sutherland as *Luisa Miller* (or *Die Meistersinger* or *Die Fledermaus* or *Die Zauberflöte* or *Die Fledermaus*, all of which roles she is singing in Australia this year and next). The trouble is that even as many of those who will look on see Sutherland as the *Widow*, would be caught dead at a performance of grand opera, many opera-lovers feel deeply insulted when they are asked to put premium prices to see Sutherland as the *Widow*.

Some even go so far as to refuse to imagine that they may have her as the *Widow*. Does it make sense to drive away such traditional opera-lovers in order to win a broader audience, many of whom will not be interested in progressing on to more serious opera anyhow?

And some opera-lovers, who do not even

small measure object to hearing Joan Sutherland at all because they dislike her unique vocal sound. More object to seeing Joan Sutherland. Joan Sutherland and Joan Sutherland year after year as the only international operatic superstar on offer in this part of the world. Then would a good deal rather large her one year in recital, in favour of the odd Boncristiano, Scotto, Carreras, Van Staa, Caballe, Pavarotti, Cavaras (you name her) in favour of current preferences. Total indications are that the ADG will be even more firmly committed to the Sutherland/Boncristiano syndrome from now on than that has been the past.

ALTERNATIVES

It is all very well, of course, to grumble about what we've got in the repertoire, but is there any real alternative? Are those Adelaide, Brisbane and Melbourne dividends capable of doing more than just complain? The answer remains Yes, if, and there are quite a few, to be frank, but there has just not been enough determination about to provide them all.

At least on the surface of the matter Melbourne would seem to have little if anything to complain of in its current repertory. In the Australian Opera though, and really in the only two stages whose planning was significantly affected by Boncristiano as general manager, repertory has expanded dramatically and Sutherland fans have had a field day.

Seeing the lack, the star in two operas she did not perform anywhere else in Australia, even in Sydney.

Unlike Adelaide and Brisbane, which have received only a handful of offerings each year and those hardly the pick of the year's ADG repertoires, Melbourne has received a very fair deal in three years in an objective sense. It even had the prospect of a new production last year, *La Fanciulla del West*, though its horrendous logistic problems in finding a new production 600 odd miles from home have were no doubt a significant factor prompting the decision to give up the prospect to Sydney at least for 1980.

Yet odd realities do hard, and it is impossible for Melburnians to concede they ought to be second-best to Sydney in anything, particularly anything cultural, as it is for Sydney to consider such a coup in Melbourne. As the Melbourne Arts Centre is looking ever closer over the horizon, even if not yet set quite sure exactly when it will open, and there is a bigger, better, traditionally opera-loving population in Melbourne than in Sydney, and a fair lot of ready cash theoretically available to support the establishment of a major new company to rival the ADG.

There are dangers to some of us, in these arguments even conceding they have considerable weight. In particular, it is very possible that the Sydney Opera House really was a one-off event, that the new Victorian Arts Centre, superior as it admittedly will be as a present venue for the performing arts, has no hope of realising the world-famous Sydney venue as a focus of attention and a stimulus to escalating standards. And what of the proved and tested entrepreneurial last at least in serious music circles that less Melburnians per thousand attend performances than Sydneysiders? Both the Australian Ballet, whose home is in Melbourne, draws bigger audiences in Sydney, bigger in relation to overall population, than in Melbourne. All the above points can be somewhat pre-empted anti-Melbourne, but they cannot be dismissed out of hand.

And once having dealt with such possibly perverse and niggling objections to the aforementioned new major Melbourne opera company, one has to look at the plus side of its theoretical ledger. Politically it would be a coup for the Liberal Victorian Government to support the establishment of a new major regional company for its new cultural complex. The Liberal Federal Government could be prone to sympathy not only, because of its similar political complexion but also because any such move would inevitably be a slap in the face to the (Labor) New South Wales Government, which has got all the benefits of the opera explosion in terms of



Sutherland & Tebaldi. Photo: Julian Maitland



John Archibald as Falstaff in *La Traviata*. Photo: Pauline Hanson

performing presence from the national company and tourist trade from the Opera House itself without ever contributing a brass name to the development of the art form.

Not to mention the fact that it could be a very good thing indeed, artistically, to have another major opera company in Australia under totally different management from the Australian Opera, presumably performing different repertoire and much of the time at least complementing the work of the Sydney-based AD rather than competing with it. This is a strong point, perhaps the strongest point of all, in favour of the emergence of a separate company in Melbourne as opposed to another division of the existing company.

IS A SECOND COMPANY NECESSARY?

But does Australia need a second AD-state-of-a-company at all? Even if it could use one, would not the costs double, taking public support beyond a politically acceptable level in these years when life is not meant to be easy? Not necessarily, says the pro-Melbourne argument, for the vast touring costs now incurred by the AD would be cut significantly — enough, probably, to pay the costs of setting up a second chorus, based in Melbourne, and having enough principals to make a new company functional.

The big problem would be orchestral for the Elthamton Melbourne Orchestra is heavily committed to accompanying the Australian Ballet and would not have sufficient spare time to service an opera

company, plus long tours between Melbourne and Adelaide with the odd excursion to Tasmania or the West.

It is important to be aware of the fact that running an opera company is a really complex operation that not only maximises expenses, alarmingly but at the same time actually reduces potential revenue by reducing the number of performances a company can stage. The costs involved in an effort to get the Sydney-based AD to and from Melbourne for as few as less than 200000 this year and those next are enormous, but this is only the beginning. As well as people, sets and costumes removed as well as singers — a wide range of back-up staff living away from home allowances must be paid. Engaged rehearsal time must be incurred every time a production is moved into a new theatre, no two of which are identical in terms of dimensions and technical facilities.

An opera company that sits in one house pays no fares or allowances, loses no time in performances forfeited because of travel or rehearsal time. And quite possibly in an artistically happen one than the company which tours extensively, for opera singers are human beings too and some even have spouses, and/or children from whom they don't care to be separated for months at a time.

Add up all these gross costs plus, consider the result with the manner in which our cash seems that one is when one is on the road and the arguments for the Melbourne-based high quality opera company become very convincing. Add into the mix the additional artistic bonu-

ps a second management unaffected by current AD policies and personalities and the case becomes even stronger yet. The entire Australian opera community, as well as those professionals involved should benefit.

WORSE OR BETTER?

In fact of course there is no doubt that something along this sort line will happen within the next few years, the only question is whether it happens immediately provoked by recent developments within the Australian Opera or whether the process is more leisurely. Whether to put it bluntly the process is by evolution or revolution.

It is not hard indeed to see the present status quo being perpetuated for very long at all. The Australian Opera has had a very fast go indeed as uncharitable view of Australia's opera scene, and there is sufficient dissatisfaction with its past performance and sufficient concern about the prospect of a better performance in the future if it is left to its own devices under the present hierarchy, so that the leading authorities very well may feel obliged to do something.

It would be foolish for anyone to try and guess precisely, at this stage, what will happen, that will depend primarily on who replaces Peter Hennings as the helm of the Australian Opera and how much power he is given, as well as the recommendations of the Australian Council inquiry and what action is taken to implement them. One thing is certain though: Australia's opera scene is in for at least a couple of years of organisational turmoil.

The great dangers are that, on the one hand, the existing advice that the Australian Opera as it now exists should be allowed to fumble on unguided, lumbering from crisis to crisis with no clear sense of indicating long term direction than in the past, and, on the other, that parochial and/or personal agendas should be allowed to provoke the disastrous, premature establishment of a rival company in Melbourne.

The great hope is that the Australian Council inquiry will probe deeply into the whole issue and recommend sensibly, and that its recommendations will be implemented with dispatch. The great fear is that the Fraser Government will use the current crisis as an excuse for ditching opera altogether — an action that would set the scene back more than 20 years in the country.

Whatever happens, the NAs can scarcely fail to be exciting years for opera in Australia — provided only that heads remain cool enough to avoid activating any of the old distrust mechanisms which are so treacherously negative on today's opera scene in this country.

David Gyngell editor of *Opera Australia*

FILM



By Elizabeth Riddell

Tim - the full quid

The astonishing thing about *Tim*, a film produced, directed and scripted by Michael Patric is that against all odds, it almost succeeds as a piece of entertainment. Given its theme - disease, loneliness and restyled young man is taken up by mature, wretched-up career woman love stories - it would seem to be an object of embarrassment to one and all, makers and audience.

And of course it is embarrassing. Iron to iron, because it describes an upright young man behaving like a slob, even a Paul Hogan parody of a slob, makes it hard to keep a straight face. But actually Michael Patric has a very useful tool with this theme, though the claim of delicacy made for the treatment is not exactly valid. It is the classic-ridiculous observation and camera work and the pointedly slow pace, meant no doubt to be banal - which underpins the comedy.

To spell out the plot, Tim is a 24-year-old bumbling lawbreaker and part-time gardener (voiced by the always brilliant "comical quid". He cannot read or write. His parents have disclosed to him the workings of a lawnmower but not the laws of life and death. Making Ms Mary Weston's garden looks in shorts and slacks, they are not short of illegal. Tim was born naive and sympathetic, and the stars have all made *The Handycraft House*. He likes it, and her - as he keeps saying - and creamy coffee and sugar, too. Also the beer he has with that, and Mary's cooking.

Against opposition from his older brother, Tim takes him off to his Palm Beach shack, and they frolic on the sand just like two Cuban acrobats in a cannibal

house. Last night Tim was the bachelorette of Carrie, during the delirious, if raucous, performances. But Patric's real triumph is in the casting of Michael Patric and Pat Crowley. Dad and Mum. Years of playing stereotypes have not lessened Kev's ability to get his teeth into a role, and Ms Crowley may again bring a whole lot of regeneration to the part of a housebroken, dimpled, snubbing, young, lactating, ageing woman. That's right, mother and son, with actors, notably Darren's mom in *Love/Marriage* and James' dad, and son are together. They provide the only genuine, affecting content of the film.

The catch is all the rest that Tim, in the person of McColgan - handsome with his puds, and a touch cross-dressed - is obviously, is split at what label says this tall quid. He may not be Einstein, but he is all there.

Some other questions have to be asked. If he has all these qualities on his back, as he does, how is it that he fails to notice that people die? How has he got to be a bachelorette, 24 without feeling the strength of passion? To put it rather more bluntly, even if he were she would not come across a beach pub have chased and caught her behind the sun shades on a dark night?

In other words, the story is phony. Related people of any age, do not look like Tim. The film actually, perhaps amazingly, makes this point when Mary uses a wheelbarrow to help a crippled child in and out how Tim can best be taught the young people how, exactly, what they are mentally handicapped, retarded.

Mark Blum is played by Peter I...

whose last Ingalls was as the bachelorette of Carrie. During the delirious, if raucous, performances. But Patric's real triumph is in the casting of Michael Patric and Pat Crowley. Dad and Mum. Years of playing stereotypes have not lessened Kev's ability to get his teeth into a role, and Ms Crowley may again bring a whole lot of regeneration to the part of a housebroken, dimpled, snubbing, young, lactating, ageing woman. That's right, mother and son, with actors, notably Darren's mom in *Love/Marriage* and James' dad, and son are together. They provide the only genuine, affecting content of the film.

I should not be overwhelmed to find that Tim makes some sense. His audience, around me, was in real tears apart from some strident jinglers. It will doubtless play seriously than at night. But very seriously. Because it has a *Not Recommended* Children's censorship rating. Yet nothing could be sadder unless it is the director's own. The happy nova, was not-on-their-mindfulness, tragic, anthropic, suburban and beach scenes, photographed by Paul Thompson.

Among Tim's investors were the Australian Film Commission, the NSW Film Corporation, Screen Units and the Nine Network.



Peter Ivers and Michael Patric in *Tim*

BOOKS



By John McCullum

Years of theatre

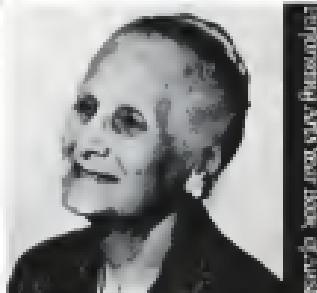
Performing Arts Year Book of Australia 1988-1989. Edited by Colin Cress. One is tempted to say "third time lucky" except that so much work has gone into it from a relatively small group of people that last year I had much to do with it. When Volume 3 (1977) appeared last year I said, more or less, that it was needless to much information thrown together with no way of finding the particular bit you want. Volume 3 was an improvement. It is clearly set out and organised into chapters and sections which are easy to find. Each company or producer is clearly identified. Above all, it has an index (of which the publishers are so proud that they have put it at the front of the book) which is a single stable reference of all the vaguely shelved list of productions into a fascinating guide to the activity of the year. With the index you can follow the work of a performer, play, playwright, museum or whatever, or simply find quickly the production details for any show, film or concert.

There is scarcely a production listed which does not have accompanying photographs, which makes it a good book to browse in.

There are still many inaccuracies, mainly typographical, and the index is in no means complete. There are also some odd differences in the space given to various shows and companies presumably caused by different material supplied to the publicity departments. The introductions to the chapters vary

considerably. Kenneth G. Hall and Bill Sikes attempt some brief critical summaries of the year (as does Nadine Andreae) but this is writing about the canonicity of the Arts but the others might not as well have signed their photographs and lettered that the best man Jim Purdyman does come up with the idea that the public should be given what it wants, and that we should make sure that's what it gets.

These are relatively minor criticisms because the index could be more accurate and comprehensive but it is still an enormous help in thumbing through the book. I am perfectly prepared to accept the publisher's claim that "if it isn't in the book, it didn't happen or wasn't worth



recording.

The profits, Ronald Hayman has come up with another book, *British Theatre Since 1979*. In spite of an introductory disclaimer that he probably makes a limited and hasty judgement, this is a critical romp through some of the work of nearly thirty playwrights which makes the few summaries look more pointed than the author intends. Hayman also claims an "historical" purpose. The book is subtitled "Reassessment" meaning a reassessment of the on-the-spot judgements of daily reviews. For Australian readers, at least, an Australian playwright might have been more interesting.

The necessarily cursory critical judgement of plays are grouped into four chapters, each concerned with a separate critical issue. The issues are the use of language, the extent of innovation and experiment, political purpose and the role of the Australian director-as-author. The strongest but most involving chapter is that on "The Politics of Hatred" which seems to fit at a large end and may as Hayman is unsympathetic to the subjugation of artistic goals to political ones and seems annoyed that many of

British's more talented writers are letting their artistic standards slip in order to pursue political ends. He uses "dilection" as a term of derogation but acknowledges that politics is the chief source of energy in the work of Brecht. Here, Polakoff, Griffiths, Arden, Bond, and others like preface, in favour of greater rigour and argument, present but then giving a full account of one of the strongest sources of vitality in modern British playwriting. He argues, rightly, that a play about individual characters cannot be a valid political statement because the generalisation can never really be made. He acknowledges that the playwrights are not interested in national political debate

Performing Arts



but stops short of saying that they are politically naive, which is where his argument seems to be heading. His artistic judgments are really themselves political judgments.

And yet these political playwrights are interested in individual characters. It is the recent British playwrights' great contribution to the modern comedy with politics in the theatre that they are attempting to find ways of placing the individual through dramatic character bonds at the centre of the broad political systems and processes they portray. If it makes for bad political argument it's still good theatre.

The interest in character does refer us back to another chapter in which Hayman points out the lack of formal experimentation in recent British playwriting. The writers have on the whole been only slightly influenced by continental writers such as Beckett, Handke and others. Hayman seems to have saved these up for another book which, according to the excellent bibliography in the one will appear before this year is out.

After all the I promise for next month a selection of recent British plays.

GUIDE

ACT

THEATRE

AT STRALIAN THEATRE

WORKSHOP

ANU Theatre Group Children's Room Hall
Charlie Bazaar by John Mullan
December 13-15

FOR LITTLE THEATRE COMPANY
Playhouse (08 44628)

Once A Castle by Mary O'Malley
director Anne Godfrey Smith Nov 26 -
Dec 4

REID HOUSE THEATRE
WORKSHOP (07 07810)

Agnes Company *Never Say The*
Evil *Never Say Evil* *Never Evil*
Throughout December

THEATRE 1 (07 40233)

Canberra Rep *Shrek* *Shrek* by
William Gilbert, director Ken Beacher
Dec 7 - 23 Wed to Sat
For curtain raiser Margaret Hellie as
49 (08)

NSW

THEATRE

ACTORS COMPANY (089 2502 966 7513)

Workshops with The Corporal May
Company December 12 Sat 9
ARIS COUNCIL OF NEW SOUTH
WALES (037 6611)

School Tours *Ally* *Ally* *Ally*
South Coast and December 13 *Shrek*
Shrek a children's play for infants and
primary *Winter* and *North West* and
December 7

CT EMBLE'S AUSTRALIA (08 6667)

Hagen *Theater*
Paddington Bear by Michael Bond and
Allard Bradley directed by Dr Dina

Comments December 28

COURT 1000 ST HOTEL (069 8202)
Orland Street, Taylor Square

The One-act Playhouse Show by Rick
Mayer and Malcolm Frawley, director
Malcolm Frawley, music, Sandra
Budgell, with Susan Augath and Steven
Sacks. Throughout December
ENSEMBLE THEATRE (029 8877)

Asiatic by David Hart, director Jon
Evans. Comments December 4

FIRST STAGE THEATRE COMPANY
(02 1661)

The Masters of Theatre in Dramatic Form
by Gary Baxier, director Chris Lewis
with Angela Horne, Darren Corrigan and
Cory Baxter. Touring to schools and
public institutions throughout December

FRANK STRALIAN'S BILL IN BUSH
THEATRE RESTAURANT (037 8627)

Threes For The Men a musical review
from the 1930s of the century to today, with
Noel Beatty, Barbara Wyndham, Garth
Meads, Neil Bryant and Helen Lederer,
director, George Corden. Throughout
December

GFREESIAN THEATRE (03 5641)

Tommy as J.J. by Noel Coward, director
Terry Hayes, with Charles Zara,
Bernadette Hayes and Guyana Mitchell
December 1-21

HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE
(02 24111)

Jesus, the musical director, George
Martin, with Hayes Gordon, Jill
Petersen, Nancie Hayes, Ric Harton,
Anne Gregg and Kevin Johns. Until
December 8

Romeo by William Shakespeare. The Old
Vic Company directed by Tom
Robertson with Derek Jacobi, June
Whitfield, Brenda Bruce, Robert Addison,
Isabel Gillies, John Bowes and Trevor
Wilton. December 11-15

HUNTER VALLEY THEATRE
COMPANY (02 25260)

In review until new year

KIRRIBILLI PUB THEATRE (02 1455)

Kirribilli Hotel, Milson's Point
The Mystery Show by P. P. Charnley,
director, Richmond Young, music, Adina
Morgan, with Patrick Wood, Marge
McCrea, Jane Hamblin, Paul Chubb and
Ric Harton. Throughout December
LFS (LITTLE FRESH PRESENTATIONS

(08 3876)

Adolescent *Music* *Theatre*, programmes of
classical music devised by Michael
Freeland for infants, primary and
secondary. Until December 7

MIKE JACKSON traditional bush music for
pre-schools, infants, primary and
secondary schools, country area from
December 11

MARIAN STREET THEATRE

(08 31669)

Savers by William Gibson, director,
Alastair Duncan, with Barry Gibson,
Paul Maybury, Yvonne Adams, Red
Dugay, Dolores Ermet, Keith Little, Alan
Royal and Carmen Taaffe. Until December
22

MUSIC HALL THEATRE

RESTAURANT (089 52229)

Last As The Devil western and directed by
Stanley Walsh with Alexander Hay, Terry
Perli and Linda Cropper. Throughout
December

MUSIC LOFT THEATRE (097 6585)

King Arthur, a review by John McKeown
and Ron Fazier, director, Bill Orr, with
Ron Fazier. Throughout December

NEW THEATRE (019 3403)

Juno and the Paycock by Sean O'Casey,
director, John Armstrong. Until
December 8

Rebel Rover by Dick Diamond, director,
Frank Barnes. December 14 15, 16, 21, 22
and 23

NIMBODD THEATRE (089 38019)

Upstairs On Our Strivings by Ben Bailey
adapted from the Seuss Book books,
director, George Whaley, with Jon Blaik,
John Clayton, Dan Crofty, Yvonne
Garrett, Nola Hartmann, Robert
Menzies, Barry Otto, Garry Rush, John
Schole and Terry Walker. Throughout
December

Downtowners *Justices*, a Sideshow
Company presentation. Comments
December 12

NSW THEATRE OF THE DEAF

(027 12601)

Stable Theatre

Double Arrow re-creating a car race show
conceived and directed by Ian Watson,
with David London, and an adult version
of *Action Spur*. *Locally There* *World*,
director Ian Watson, with Nola Collett,
Margaret Davis, David London, Cain

CONCERTS

FESTIVAL 100 THEATRE (01-0121)

John Anderson and Richard Brundage
concert series December 3

John Wilson Big Band December 4-5

The University Adelaide Symphony

Orchestra with Adelaide Choral Society
conductor Mark Freedman December

7-8

Opera and Baroque Concert Day 9

See English Christmas Show Dec 19

For series contact John Wilson 2238870

TAS

THEATRE

SATURDAY (24-5294)

Grease 'Grease' by Barry Kestle director
Richard Meehan has a general public
auditions at the Bandroom Theatre

December 16-17 & 18-19 (8.30pm and open)

TASMANIA PUPPET THEATRE

(23-7986)

Anthony Dawson, Peter Wilson, music
John Schubert, designer Jennifer

Davison touring East Coast, North East

Coast and Tasmania

THEATRE BOX 82 (34-8266)

Apparatus Theatre Project Day long
performances and 45 minute Bush 45
sketches Evening performances

December 19

Royal Hobart Hospital Suite December

12-13-14-15

DANCE

THE STREETSIDE (34-8264)

Carol Warner Ballet School December 20

For series contact the central office on
03000 87 4770

VIC

THEATRE

THE FORUM THEATRE (479 1610)

Matrix the Flying Dragon (Saturday)

THE FORUM THEATRE (24-9867)

Companies One and Two touring to
schools, libraries, youth and women's
theatre classes

THE FORUM THEATRE (24-9867)

12 years to Roger Hall director, then
Markay Return Seven Company Theatre
November 20-December 22

THE FORUM THEATRE (24-9867)

GROUPE (047 7151)

From Theatre Fishing Is Love by Jim
Carroll

Rich Theatre Summer Players/season and
Garrison's Pioneer Theatre Group

COMEDY CAFE

With Rod Quirk

COMEDY THEATRE (061 4949)

12 years to Roger Hall, See See 10th
anniversary

CREATION THEATRE (061 4742)

Community based touring to schools
libraries and community centres

CREATION THEATRE (061 7727)

Young People's Australian (long-distance
only)

CREATION THEATRE FOUNDATION

061 48865

Playbox The League Men's for
Christmas closed and directed by Murray
Copeland. The traditional Community
playbox, created with Margaret
Cavendish Michael Dabbs, Harold
Bergen, Peter Ford and Leslie Gammie

THE FORUM THEATRE (24-9867)

1600 0000

Old Vic Company Much Ado About
Shakespeare director, John Robertson
with Denis Lillie. To early December

Big Picture's new show. Park new
star

THE FORUM THEATRE

THE FORUM THEATRE (479 8236)

12 years to Centring
1 person, Alan Portland's Short Cuts
(mark 2)

THE FORUM THEATRE

Grease 'Grease' by Daniel Kehlman and
Jed Brophy. Dates change December

6-31

THE FORUM THEATRE COMPANY

0344-40001

Russell Street, Clare & Carlton by Alan
Cuthbert, director, Ray Taylor, with
Vivian Davies

Atherton Travelling Youth by David

Reid, directed by Lynne McVernon

John Bell with Frank McRae and Lynne

Ray. To December 15

Underworld by Frank Harvey. To Feb 12

Atherton 2. Remus by Shakespeare

director, John Saurier, with John Balmer

0111-MILL 1-0521 (21 1444)

Drama Centre, of Deakin University

Regular touring production

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0111-6504

Grease, Grease and Disney's Disney

Blues, Disney's Disney

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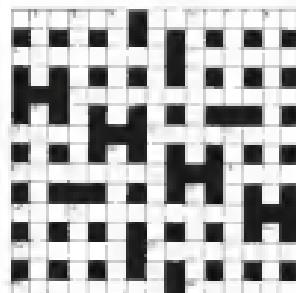
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Across:

- 1 The French played an article in the Southern Land (6)
- 3 Mud, an rare charm (8)
- 5 Look at Northern Lad in the countenance, doing a dancing number (13)
- 10 "That rather tallian, that - in years?" (Offenbach) (11)
- 11 Twelfth-century perchance against theology sage (12)
- 13 Point in a small divers vegetable (4)
- 14 Vessel used in special rare labs (8)
- 17 Savage short man can be delightfully prepossessing (4-4)
- 18 Short appreciation of a friend returning to bark the head of Congress (4)
- 20 Theatrical statement of results for the

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delivered (5.7)

21 International glorified! (11) *Akbarach*, *not* (6)

23 Thus a poor leaven behind novice's hedge and becomes a judge (8)

26 Conflict involving good man, commoner (8)

Down:

2 Takings all beer and世界各国 (14)

4 Shade sounds as though it might be *discreet* (8)

5 A 22. High dynamic and *near* encountered by sailors (13-7-4)

6 Uniformed person who *crosses* that is to the love of the dogs (8)

7 Volatile names are *figurative* (13)

8 The worker is *heading* towards a backwash in *harbor*, but *misanthropic* (10)

12 In Yugoslavia the bunch *women* the girls (3-3)

15 Put your money on the step! That's *admirable*

16 From deep and *deeps* to *shallow* study (8)

19 *Scamper* has sheltered by *lunatic* leaf (6)

21 Dramatic division not noticed by 24 *we hear* (6)

22 *See* 3

Last month's answers

The last answers are

shown in December

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year in three sub-

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For a copy of *Last*

Answers send to Mr. J. Hargreaves

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